

The Bible *Through* African Eyes: A Comparative Study of the Epistemology in the Hermeneutics of Indigenous Preachers in Eastern Zambia with that in Select Intra-Biblical Appropriations and Re-appropriations of the Exodus Event and its Ramifications for African Biblical Hermeneutical Methods

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Thesis Declaration

I, Misheck Nyirenda, declare that this thesis is my own work and that I have not submitted this material for any other degree or qualification.

Misheck Nyirenda

October 2006

In dedication

To the memory of my father, for remaining optimistic to the end

To the memory of my sister, Janet, for the gift of sibling love

To the memory of my brother, Brown, for excelling in humble circumstances

And to the praise of the Lord Jesus Christ, ὃν οὐκ ἰδόντες ἀγαπῶμεν, εἰς ὃν ἄρτι μὴ ὁρῶντες πιστεύοντες δὲ Ἀγαλλιώμεθα χαρᾷ ἀνεκκλήτῳ καὶ δεδοξασμένη

(adapted from **1 Peter 1:8**)

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....v

Abstract..... vi

Abbreviations..... vii

Introduction..... 1

 TERMS, PARAMETERS AND FOCUS2

 IN SEARCH OF AFRICAN BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICAL METHODS4

PART I: BACKGROUND AND METHOD.....7

CHAPTER 1: EPISTEMOLOGY IN MODERNITY AND POSTMODERNITY IN
RELATION TO AFRICAN BIBLICAL SCHOLARSHIP.....8

 A. PHILOSOPHY AND HEGEMONY: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE.....9

 A.1. *Modernity*..... 13

 A.2. *Postmodernity* 18

 B. POSTCOLONIAL IDENTITIES IN AFRICA20

 B.1. *Social-Political Postcolonial Identities in Africa*..... 22

 B.2. *Postcolonial Trends and Trajectories in African Biblical Scholarship* 24

 B.3. *Education and Biblical Scholarship in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Problematic for African
Biblical Scholarship*28

CHAPTER 2: CONTINUITIES BETWEEN AFRICAN CULTURES AND THE
CULTURES IN THE HEBREW BIBLE37

 1. COHERENCE AND SPIRITUALITY OF CREATION41

 2. COHERENCE AND HIERARCHY OF SOCIETY46

 3. CONCRETENESS.....51

 3.1. *Concreteness in Time*.....52

 3.2. *Concreteness in Communication and Language*.....55

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH FIELD, PARAMETERS AND METHODOLOGIES ..59

 A. RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE OF ZAMBIA: RESEARCH FIELD,
METHODOLOGY AND PARAMETERS59

 A.1. *Research Field*59

 A.2. *Research Method* 64

 B. RESEARCH INTO APPROPRIATIONS AND RE-APPROPRIATIONS OF THE EXODUS EVENT WITHIN
THE BIBLE.....73

| | |
|---|-----|
| <i>B.1. Issues pertaining to the ontology and unity of the Old Testament documents and Old Testament theological method</i> | 73 |
| <i>B.2. Text and Interpretation</i> | 76 |
| <i>B.3. Research Method</i> | 78 |
| PART II: EPISTEMOLOGY AND ITS RELATION TO HERMENEUTICAL PRACTICES | 80 |
| CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS – THE HERMENEUTICS AND HOMILETICS OF INDIGENOUS PREACHERS IN EASTERN ZAMBIA | 81 |
| A. EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND | 82 |
| <i>A.1. People of God</i> | 82 |
| <i>A.2. Unity and Continuity of Scripture</i> | 85 |
| <i>A.3. Immanence of God</i> | 87 |
| <i>A.4. Redemption</i> | 89 |
| B. BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION..... | 91 |
| <i>B.1. Immanence in Biblical interpretation</i> | 92 |
| <i>B.2. Extending Scripture</i> | 97 |
| <i>B.3. Multitude of Witnesses</i> | 106 |
| <i>B.4. “Incarnating” Scripture</i> | 109 |
| C. DIVINE EFFECT..... | 113 |
| CHAPTER 5: EVALUATION OF THE UNDERLYING EPISTEMOLOGY IN THE ZAMBIAN DATA AND ITS RELATION TO THE PRACTICE OF HERMENEUTICS AND HOMILETICS | 115 |
| A. EPISTEMOLOGY IN THE RESEARCH DATA IN THE LIGHT OF THE AFRICAN EPISTEMOLOGICAL CONSTITUTION IN CHAPTER 2..... | 115 |
| <i>A.1. Coherence and Spirituality of Creation</i> | 116 |
| <i>A.2. Coherence and Hierarchy of Society</i> | 120 |
| <i>A.3. Concreteness</i> | 123 |
| B. OTHER POSSIBLE CAUSES FOR THE EPISTEMOLOGY IN THE RESEARCH DATA..... | 138 |
| <i>B.1. Theological Training and Tradition</i> | 139 |
| <i>B.2. Priority of Audience</i> | 143 |
| <i>B.3. Uncritical Reading through Reader’s Epistemology</i> | 145 |
| CHAPTER 6: SELECT INTRA-BIBLICAL APPROPRIATIONS AND RE-APPROPRIATIONS OF THE EXODUS EVENT | 149 |
| BACKGROUND TO INTRA-BIBLICAL APPROPRIATIONS AND RE-APPROPRIATIONS | 149 |
| <i>Introduction</i> | 149 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| <i>A Synopsis of the Deposit of the Exodus Tradition in the Book of Exodus</i> | 153 |
| A. THE SONG AT THE SEA | 157 |
| <i>A.1. Sitz im Leben of the Song at the Sea</i> | 158 |
| <i>A.2. Analytical Commentary</i> | 161 |
| B. A PSALM OF ASAPH | 173 |
| <i>B.1. Sitz im Leben of Psalm 77</i> | 173 |
| <i>B.2. Analytical Commentary</i> | 176 |
| C. THE COVENANT AT SHECHEM | 185 |
| <i>C.1. Sitz im Leben of Joshua 24</i> | 185 |
| <i>C.2. Analytical Commentary</i> | 189 |
| D. THE PRAYER OF HABAKKUK | 199 |
| <i>D.1. Sitz im Leben of Habakkuk 3</i> | 199 |
| <i>D.2. Analytical Commentary</i> | 202 |
| CHAPTER 7: EPISTEMOLOGY IN THE APPROPRIATIONS AND RE- APPROPRIATIONS OF THE EXODUS EVENT | 210 |
| A. EPISTEMOLOGY IN THE SONG AT THE SEA | 213 |
| B. EPISTEMOLOGY IN PSALM 77:1-21 | 218 |
| C. EPISTEMOLOGY IN JOSHUA 24:1-28..... | 224 |
| D. EPISTEMOLOGY IN THE PRAYER OF HABAKKUK | 229 |
| PART III: TOWARDS AN AFRICAN BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICAL METHOD | 235 |
| CHAPTER 8: CONTINUITIES BETWEEN THE EPISTEMOLOGY EVIDENCED IN THE ZAMBIAN RESEARCH DATA AND IN THE BIBLICAL DATA AND THEIR RAMIFICATIONS FOR AFRICAN BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICAL METHODS | 236 |
| A. CONTINUITIES BETWEEN THE EPISTEMOLOGY IN THE ZAMBIAN RESEARCH DATA AND IN SELECT INTRA-BIBLICAL APPROPRIATIONS AND RE-APPROPRIATIONS OF THE EXODUS EVENT | 236 |
| <i>1. Correlation of epistemological categories between the biblical data and Zambian research data</i> | 237 |
| B. AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR AFRICAN BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICAL METHODS ... | 270 |
| <i>1. A profile of an African epistemological foundation for biblical hermeneutical methods</i> | 270 |
| <i>2. African biblical hermeneutical methods and biblical scholarship</i> | 282 |
| CONCLUSION..... | 286 |
| SUMMARY OF THESIS..... | 286 |
| CONTRIBUTIONS TO CURRENT RESEARCH | 287 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| PROJECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH..... | 289 |
| APPENDIX I: BRIEF HISTORIES OF THE CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS OF THE RESPONDENTS IN ZAMBIA | 291 |
| APPENDIX II: PROFILES OF THE RESPONDENTS | 300 |
| APPENDIX III: DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF EXODUS 1-14..... | 304 |
| APPENDIX IV: POETIC ANALYSIS OF THE SONG AT THE SEA | 335 |
| APPENDIX V: POETIC ANALYSIS OF PSALM 77:1-21 | 338 |
| APPENDIX VI: DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF JOSHUA 24:1-28 | 341 |
| APPENDIX VII: POETIC ANALYSIS OF HABAKKUK 3:1-19..... | 344 |
| APPENDIX VIII: MAP OF AFRICA – ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION | 348 |
| APPENDIX IX: MAP OF EASTERN PROVINCE, ZAMBIA – ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION | 349 |
| APPENDIX X: MAP OF EASTERN PROVINCE, ZAMBIA – PETAUKE, KATETE, CHADIZA, CHIPATA AND LUNDAZI DISTRICTS | 350 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 351 |
| TRANSCRIPTS | 351 |
| ELECTRONIC SOURCES | 353 |
| REFERENCE WORKS..... | 353 |
| GENERAL WORKS..... | 354 |

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Abstract

The Bible *Through* African Eyes, is a comparative study of the epistemologies in primary research data from Zambia and select intra-biblical appropriations and re-appropriations of the Exodus event with a view to delineate continuities between them and to use these as a basis for African biblical hermeneutical methods. It is based on the hypothesis that the two epistemologies are similar. The thesis belongs to philosophical hermeneutics, cultural anthropology and biblical studies.

The thesis addresses the imperative and identifies a basis for Africans to undertake biblical hermeneutics from African socio-cultural realities and epistemological constitution. It presumes that the Modern Missionary Movement was profoundly shaped by the European Enlightenment and that missionaries inevitably brought this worldview to Africa along with Christianity. It understands the historical critical method as a product of Enlightenment thought. The thesis follows the approach of modern African biblical scholars who exploit the intellectual criticism of the Enlightenment in the post-modern movement to participate in biblical scholarship from their own epistemological constitutions and social-cultural realities. Finally, it argues that epistemological continuities between the Zambian and the biblical material provide a base on which Africans can articulate biblical hermeneutical theory that is rooted in their socio-cultural realities and epistemology and is empathetic to the socio-cultural realities and epistemology in the biblical texts.

The thesis will offer critical evaluation of the hermeneutics and homiletics of select preachers in Eastern Province, Zambia, and the hermeneutics in select intra-biblical appropriations and re-appropriations of the Exodus event under the three scholarly disciplines mentioned above with a view to establish the epistemologies in them. It will compare these epistemologies to establish continuities. These continuities form the basis for articulating African biblical hermeneutical methods and establish the value of the epistemology in the Zambian data for biblical scholarship as an alternative to the ongoing hegemony of Western epistemology in biblical scholarship in Africa.

The thesis makes use of qualitative research data gathered from select preachers in Zambia to establish a correlation between their worldview and socio-cultural realities and their hermeneutics. It uses select intra-biblical appropriations and re-appropriations of the Exodus event to establish that the appropriations imply a particular worldview and epistemology. Analysis of sermons and interviews in the Zambian data and of the Exodus narrative and its appropriations and re-appropriations in the Hebrew Bible enables epistemologies to emerge that make comparison and the articulation of a basis for African biblical hermeneutical methods possible.

The thesis is organised in three parts. Part I summarizes the discourse regarding the influence of Western philosophies in sub-Saharan Africa, continuities between African and OT worldviews in African biblical scholarship and sets out our research methods and parameters. Part II contains the primary data chapters and the epistemologies for comparison in Part III. Part III establishes epistemological continuities in the data and grounds for an African biblical hermeneutic.

Abbreviations

| | |
|---------------|---|
| <i>ASTI</i> | <i>Annual of Swedish Theological Institute</i> |
| <i>AJBS</i> | <i>Africa Journal of Biblical Studies</i> |
| <i>AJHG</i> | <i>American Journal of Human Genetics</i> |
| BDB | Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles Briggs, <i>The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i> (1996) |
| BHS | <i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> . Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft (1997) |
| <i>BOTSA</i> | <i>Bulletin for Old Testament Studies in Africa</i> |
| <i>BQ</i> | <i>The Baptist Quarterly</i> |
| CR | <i>Currents in Research: Biblical Studies</i> |
| CSR | <i>Christian Scholar's Review</i> |
| <i>EAOSS</i> | <i>Evangelische Arbeitsstelle Oekumene Schweiz</i> |
| <i>ET</i> | <i>Expository Times</i> |
| <i>FD</i> | <i>Faculty Dialogue</i> |
| <i>GBT</i> | <i>The Ghana Bulletin of Theology</i> |
| GNT | United Bible Societies 3/4 Greek New Testament |
| <i>HBR</i> | <i>Harvard Business Review</i> |
| <i>HB</i> | <i>Hibbert Journal</i> |
| <i>JBL</i> | <i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i> |
| <i>JNES</i> | <i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i> |
| <i>JOTSSA</i> | <i>Old Testament Essays: Journal of the Old Testament Society of South Africa</i> |
| <i>JSOT</i> | <i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i> |

| | |
|--------------|---|
| <i>JTSA</i> | <i>Journal of Theology for Southern Africa</i> |
| KJV | King James Version (1611/1769) |
| <i>LQHR</i> | <i>London Quarterly and Holborn Review</i> |
| LXX | Septuagint |
| MT | Masoretic Text |
| NASB | New American Standard Bible (1977) |
| NJB | New Jerusalem Bible |
| NKJB | New King James Bible (1982) |
| NRSV | New Revised Standard Version (1989) |
| <i>OJT</i> | <i>Ogbomoso Journal of Theology</i> |
| <i>PMLAA</i> | <i>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</i> |
| <i>RAL</i> | <i>Research in African Literatures</i> |
| RSV | Revised Standard Version (1952) |
| <i>SR</i> | <i>Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses</i> |
| <i>SSI</i> | <i>Studies in Symbolic Interaction</i> |
| <i>USQR</i> | <i>Union Seminary Quarterly Review</i> |
| YLT | Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898) |
| <i>ZAW</i> | <i>Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i> |

Abbreviations of biblical books are consistent with those in *JBL* 107/3 (1988): 579-596.

Introduction

‘Through African eyes’ has a pedestrian ring to it¹ yet it reflects the aspirations of African biblical scholarship in the postcolony. Since all biblical scholarship is rooted in particular conceptual frameworks,² Africans are embracing the challenge of conducting biblical scholarship through their own epistemological and socio-cultural realities. This research developed out of the researcher’s own experience in teaching biblical hermeneutics to candidates for Christian ministry in Zambia. A brief introduction is required, therefore, in order to clarify the background, context and approaches which characterise the study itself.

In 1994, the researcher graduated with a Bachelor of Theology degree from Trans-Africa Theological College, Kitwe, Zambia and was retained by the college as a Staff Development Fellow. The college established the Staff Development Programme to identify and develop nationals who evidenced potential for its faculty needs. The college is jointly run by the Pentecostal Assemblies of God (Zambia) and Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, a partnership reflected in the composition of the faculty. Since its re-establishment in 1978,³ it has produced scores of graduates, mostly Zambians but also from neighbouring countries, who have been instrumental in the phenomenal growth of the Assemblies of God and related Christian movements in the region.

The researcher’s involvement in lecturing was both inspiring and epistemologically disruptive. The sense of vocation and desire to engage the Scriptures and related disciplines on the part of the students was very strong. However, the methods of pedagogy, essentially deconstructing, abstracting and repackaging material

¹ Cf. J. S. Ukpong, “Rereading the Bible with African Eyes: Inculturation and Hermeneutics,” *JTSA*, no. 91 (1995): 5.

² Cf. Knut Holter, *Yahweh in Africa*, Bible and Theology in Africa, vol. 1 (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 36-37; and A. O. Mojola, “The Social Sciences and the Study of the Old Testament in Africa: Some Methodological Considerations,” in *Interpreting the Old Testament in Africa*, ed. M. N. Getui, Knut Holter, and Victor Zinkurati, Biblical Studies in African Scholarship Series (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2001), 90-92.

³ The institution existed under different names and with different aims prior to this period.

systematically to 'facilitate' comprehension, sucked the vitality out of biblical traditions and required mastery of new forms of thinking. Instruction became an exercise in rational and abstract appreciation, formulation and articulation of concepts. The curricula and textbooks used also encouraged this process.

In 1997, he went to Regent College, Canada, for postgraduate study, intending to master the finer points of Christian theology and its tools. He studied the New Testament, according to the emphasis placed on that part of the Scriptures in his evangelical Christian tradition. For context, he studied biblical Hebrew and some Old Testament courses and was intrigued by the familiarity of the conceptual framework in the material.⁴ He changed majors to Old Testament, wrote a thesis on an African reading of Genesis 4, and has continued to research into the relationships between conceptual framework and biblical interpretation and theology. The need for relevance in methods of pedagogy in Zambia and the invitation of the familiarity of biblical Hebrew and Old Testament traditions drive this study.

Terms, Parameters and Focus

'African biblical hermeneutical methods' are multi-faceted and, therefore, the phrase as used in this thesis requires clarification. Perhaps it is useful to explain what it does not refer to before defining what it does.

It does not refer to the myriads of approaches in African Christianity that do not attempt to engage critically the epistemological, historical and socio-cultural realities in the biblical material. In Barton's four-fold classification of areas of focus in biblical criticism,⁵ the phrase refers to reader-focussed methods, where the 'reader' is constrained by the biblical text in the light of historical criticism. However, it adopts historical critical methods without embracing the possibility and pursuit of critical

⁴ Cf. Oduyoye and Kanyoro who state, "The Bible was written in a culture similar to our African culture". M. A. Oduyoye and M. R. A. Kanyoro, *The Will to Arise: Women, Tradition, and the Church in Africa* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1995), 4.

⁵ These are the biblical text, the historical events narrated in the text, author(s) of the text and the reader. John Barton, "Classifying Biblical Criticism," *JSOT* 29 (1984): 20-23.

‘objectivity’ that is free from prejudices on the part of the scholar. Finally, it does not refer to ‘critical’ approaches that wittingly impose ideological presuppositions and agendas on the biblical material.

‘African biblical hermeneutical methods’ refers to approaches that recognize that inclusion of a reader’s ‘conceptual framework’ and ‘socio-cultural realities’ is fundamental to all biblical interpretation and seek to make the African conceptual framework and socio-cultural realities the ‘subject’ of interpretation.⁶ For the faith community, these realities include faith experience and the impulse to appropriate Scripture for spiritual benefit.⁷

‘Biblical’ is used adjectivally and refers to ‘what relates to or is demonstrable in’ the Bible. ‘Bible’ and its synonyms refer to the MT, GNT and all the translations that are at the disposal of the respondents in the Zambian research data. It is a reference made without critical consideration of the textual bases of these translations. The same lack of precision applies to the use of terms such as ‘Scriptures’, ‘Scripture’, and ‘biblical traditions’ which are used interchangeably.

‘Conceptual framework’ refers to “the mental construct within which exegetes are trained, into which they grow and with which they operate”.⁸ We use it interchangeably with ‘epistemological construct’, ‘epistemological framework’ and ‘epistemological constitution’.

‘Epistemology’ refers to the theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge especially with reference to its limits and validity.⁹ We regard it as specific to conceptual frameworks or ‘public collective licensing’.¹⁰

⁶ Ukpong: 5.

⁷ Cf. “exegesis as a contemporizing enterprise” in halakic or legal exegesis. R. N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, Second ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), xxvi.

⁸ Ukpong: 7.

⁹ *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 10 ed. (Springfield, Massachusetts: William-Webster Incorporated, 1996), 390.

¹⁰ S. Toulmin, *Human Understanding*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 10.

‘Coherence’ refers to inter-connectedness. It is applicable to both people and concepts. We use ‘concreteness’ interchangeably with ‘phenomenological’ to refer to graphic conceptualisation and presentation.

‘Continuities’ refers to the ‘close affinities or similarities with those of the Biblical world’¹¹ that African epistemology and socio-cultural realities demonstrate. They are the perceived basis for Africa’s ‘predilection with the Old Testament’.¹²

Finally, ‘socio-cultural realities’ are the sociological and cultural realities that are part of a person’s life experience. They include epistemic tools, circumstances and practices in a particular society.

In Search of African Biblical Hermeneutical Methods

This thesis is research into the relationships between conceptual framework and appropriation of biblical texts in two sets of data. It seeks to expose elements in the appropriation of texts that betray particular epistemological frameworks and conversely to examine how these frameworks influence the appropriations. We use qualitative and historical critical methods to extract epistemologies from the data in the light of the discourse regarding epistemological and socio-cultural continuities between African and OT cultures. We then compare the emergent epistemologies with a view to confirm the hypothesis that continuities exist and establish a base for African biblical hermeneutical methods.

The appendices inform the analysis. The brief history of the Christian traditions of the respondents in Zambia in Appendix I and the profiles of the respondents in Appendix II provide insights into other possible contributions to the hermeneutics of the respondents. Appendix II also includes a compact disc of the transcripts, in the languages in which they were recorded, of the sermons and interviews from the

¹¹ Mojola, 97.

¹² K. A. Dickson, *Theology in Africa* (Maryknoll, New York and London: Orbis Books and Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd., 1984), 145.

research in Zambia to facilitate independent corroboration of the researcher's findings. The maps, Appendices VIII-X, locate the respondents in geographical and ethnic contexts within Africa.

The discourse analysis of Exodus 1-14, Appendix III, shows the narrative flows in the presumed referent tradition in the Hebrew Bible for the appropriations. The poetic analyses of the Song at the Sea, Psalm 77 and the prayer of Habakkuk, and the discourse analysis of Joshua 24, Appendices IV-VII, are critical tools for delineating the elements of the Exodus tradition that have been appropriated and the uses to which they are put.

This thesis is divided into three parts and eight chapters. Part I provides a summary of the discourse regarding the influence of Western philosophies in sub-Saharan Africa, the presumed epistemological framework for both sets of data and the methodologies and parameters of the research. It has three chapters.

Chapter 1 is a summary of the history of colonialism and the Modern Missionary Movement with a view to show how they reflected philosophical developments in the West. It also summarizes the effects of their legacy in postcolonial African societies and biblical scholarship.

Chapter 2 is a summary of the findings of research into continuities between African and OT cultures. In it, we identify select features of these findings for consideration in the analysis of the two sets of data. In Chapter 3, we set out the parameters, limits and methodologies of the research in Zambia and the Bible.

In Part II, we present the research data and the first level of analysis, that which reveals the epistemologies that become the basis for the second level of analysis in Part III. There are four chapters in Part II.

In chapter 4, we present the qualitative data from the research in Zambia in a format that facilitates the extraction of epistemological theory from it. In Chapter 5, we articulate this theory by correlating the evidence in the data with the respondents' reasons for it.

In Chapter 6, we present the biblical research data from historical critical readings of four texts that refer to the Exodus tradition to varying degrees. We note the nature of

these appropriations carefully and correlate them with Exodus 1-14 in the light of the continuities in Chapter 2. This analysis provides us with a basis for profiling the epistemological theory and hence, epistemological framework that governs these appropriations in Chapter 7.

In Part III, we conduct the second level of analysis. We compare the epistemological features in the Zambian research data and those in the biblical data and isolate features that confirm the hypothesis that OT cultures and African cultures bear epistemological and socio-cultural similarities. Using these features, we articulate an epistemological foundation for African biblical hermeneutical methods. Finally, we discuss the potential value for hermeneutical methods based on this foundation in relation to other biblical hermeneutical approaches.

Part I: Background and Method

Chapter 1: Epistemology in Modernity and Postmodernity in Relation to African Biblical Scholarship

In this chapter, we locate African biblical scholarship in the context of philosophical developments in the world. We also argue for the development of African biblical hermeneutical methodologies as legitimate and viable tools in the global task of biblical exegesis.

First, we identify philosophical trends in Modernism, Postmodernism and Post-colonialism. Then, we consider the African postcolony as it relates to the influence and legacy of Modernism and the current environment of Postmodernism in Western Europe and North America.

We intend to establish that the Christian missionary movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries brought to Africa a Christianity shaped by the European Enlightenment and its intellectual presuppositions. Second, we intend to establish that this intellectual framework still dominates sub-Saharan Africa. It produced the African nationalists who challenged European imperialism. It shaped the African intellectual elite that now rules Africa. It continues to be the framework for educational systems in Africa.

Third, we intend to establish that the African postcolony is fundamentally not a philosophical construct but space for Africans to reflect and 'speak'. Postmodern criticism of Enlightenment thought is opening up room for marginal voices worldwide. Below, we give a brief outline of some of the consequences of Enlightenment thought in Africa. These include current political and social realities and trends in African biblical scholarship.

A. Philosophy and Hegemony: A Historical Perspective

In considering the influence of Western philosophical developments in Africa, we limit ourselves to those in Modernity and Postmodernity because they correspond with the current experience of Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa.

Establishing the genesis of a philosophy is always problematic because philosophies arise as a consequence of multiple factors and over a period.¹ They are identifiable after attaining some measure of crystallisation and prominence.

For example, Middleton and Walsh argue that the basic impulses of the Modern worldview lie somewhere between 1470 (the beginning of the Italian Renaissance) and 1700 (the start of the Enlightenment).² Its definition is equally problematic. However, in spite of the danger of oversimplification, it is possible to isolate some broad conceptual generalizations.³

Any philosophical system is a product of its time and circumstances.⁴ This makes every philosophy a provincial entity. Likewise, every research tool is rooted in commitments to an epistemological framework.⁵ However, philosophical systems do not attain the same degree of acceptance and influence. Some dominate others. This could be for several reasons that we will discuss in terms of vantage points.

The domination of one philosophical system over another could be a consequence of shifts in political power. For example, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o sees the fact that

¹ J. R. Middleton and B. J. Walsh, *Truth Is Stranger Than It Used to Be: Biblical Faith in a Postmodern Age* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 13.

² B. J. Walsh and J. R. Middleton, *The Transforming Vision: Shaping a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1984), chapter 8. Cf. B. D. McLaren, *A New Kind of Christian: A Tale of Two Friends on a Spiritual Journey* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001), 29. For earlier dates (12th century), see S. Toulmin and June Goodfield, *Discovery of Time* (Harmondworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd, 1965), 90.

³ Middleton and Walsh, 14.

⁴ J. Hughes, *The Philosophy of Social Research*, 2 ed. (London: Longman, 1990), 11.

⁵ "The relevance of philosophical issues . . . arises from the fact that every research tool or procedure is inextricably embedded in commitments to particular versions of the world and to knowing that world. . . . No technique or method is self-validating. Its effectiveness, i.e. its very status as a research instrument making the world tractable to the investigation is . . . ultimately dependent on epistemological justifications." Ibid. Cf. Toulmin, 13-14.

Enlightenment thought was the epistemological framework of imperial authorities and European missionaries to Africa as responsible for the rise in the status and acceptability of European ways of thinking and living both in the African nationalist movement and the in policies of ruling neo-colonial African elites.⁶

Philosophical hegemony can occur outside the context of political dominion. For example, Dickson argues that the propagation of any faith carries with it an exclusivist influence, an essentially negative attitude towards the traditional life and thought of those evangelised.⁷ Notable examples of philosophical domination include how the reflections of Descartes and Locke “provided a basic ontological description of the world and epistemological prescriptions about how [the] world could be investigated.”⁸

For Descartes, common sense or reason, the power to judge correctly and to distinguish the true from the false, is naturally equal in all men.⁹ However, reason requires proper direction to attain truth.¹⁰ Four principles supply this direction. (1) Truth self-evidently presents itself to your mind. (2) Reduce difficulties into smaller divisions for easy analysis. (3) Build truth systematically using reason from the simplest and easiest to the most complex. (4) “Make enumerations so complete, and reviews so general, that [you] would be sure to omit nothing.”¹¹

⁶ Cf. Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (London: James Currey Ltd, 1986), 1-3; *Moving the Centre: The Struggle for Cultural Freedoms* (London: James Currey Ltd, 1993), 30-40; and *Barrel of a Pen: Resistance to Repression in Neo-Colonial Kenya* (London: New Beacon Books, 1983), 77-86.

⁷ K. A. Dickson, *Uncompleted Mission: Christianity and Exclusivism* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 85-91, 124. According to Sanneh, ideological exclusivism in the process of translatability diminishes as the receivers of the message incorporate the new faith into their own reflective processes. Lamin Sanneh, *Encountering the West. Christianity and the Global Cultural Process: The African Dimension* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1993), 16-17; and *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (MaryKnoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1989), 1, 11-34, 50.

⁸ John A. Hughes and Wesley W. Sharrock, *The Philosophy of Social Research*, Third ed, Longman Social Research Series (London: Longman, 1997), 8.

⁹ R. Descartes, *Discourse on Method, Optics, Geometry, and Meteorology*, trans. Paul J. Olscamp (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co, Inc, 1965), 4.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

For Locke, inquiry into ‘understanding’, the origin, certainty, and extent of human knowledge together with degrees of Belief, Opinion and Assent,¹² begins with an examination of one’s own abilities to determine what objects they are fitted to deal with.¹³ It also begins with a rejection of innate knowledge and an understanding that experience is the source of all knowledge.¹⁴ Knowledge is perception where perception includes identity (including identifying differences, hence *diversity*), relation (to other idea), co-existence and real existence (existence outside the mind to which the mind relates).¹⁵

Descartes and Locke were reflecting within a definite epistemological framework and presuppositions.¹⁶ The wide acceptance of their conclusions by scientists and philosophers elevated them to universal status and they became the acceptable framework for all academic reflection.¹⁷

Within an epistemological framework, philosophical inquiry becomes a tool for establishing a logical rationale. Epistemological certitude can only be settled by recourse to the epistemological framework “from which the intellectual authority of . . . knowledge derives.”¹⁸

Philosophical inquiry can ask questions about this framework that seek to explore its epistemological ontology using potentially subversive lines of questioning.¹⁹

¹² J. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Abridged and Edited ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924; reprint, Abridged and Edited by A. J. Pringle-Pattison), 9.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 4, 11, 14.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, xiv.

¹⁵ Locke, 253-257.

¹⁶ “They discussed the principles of human knowledge in the light of current ideas both of the Order of Material Nature (i.e. physics), and about the Mental and Bodily Powers of Man (i.e. psychology and physiology). ... (1) The Order of Nature is fixed and stable, and the mind of man acquires intellectual mastery over it by reasoning in accordance to the Principles of Understanding that are equally fixed and universal. (2) Matter is essentially inert, and the active source or inner seat of rational, self-motivated activity is a completely distinct Mind, or Consciousness, within which all the highest mental functions are localized. (3) Geometrical knowledge provides a comprehensive standard of incorrigible certainty, against which all other claims of knowledge must be judged.” Toulmin, 13-14. Cf. Goodfield, 91.

¹⁷ Hughes and Sharrock, *Philosophy of Social Research*, 8.

¹⁸ Toulmin, 10.

¹⁹ In this regard, Hughes points out that philosophical inquiry can arise from within any framework. Hughes and Sharrock, *Philosophy of Social Research*, 6, 12.

Nevertheless, claims to certitude are only possible within an existing framework. In this vein, Huppé and Kaminsky note that language should not be analysed as though it does not owe its symbolic nature to the people who agree concerning the meanings of its symbols.²⁰

The centrality of conceptual frameworks to knowledge directly impinges on our discussion of philosophical hegemony. If philosophical frameworks are the context of any knowledge claim then dominant frameworks do not necessarily hold the keys to knowledge generated in other frameworks. Dominant does not necessarily mean better.²¹

Smith argues that any attempt by anyone to transcend their philosophical particularity is misguided, an epistemological wild-goose chase. Since the bubble of realism²² in hermeneutics burst at the hands of historicism,²³ such an effort merely leads to the assertion of a new prejudice (convention) over its predecessor.²⁴

For Smith, finitude or reading from within an epistemological framework and temporal distance is of the very essence of being human.²⁵ However, we should not construe finitude in the hermeneutical act to mean that humanity is doomed to

²⁰ Bernard F. Huppé and Jack Kaminsky, *Logic and Language* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc, 1959), 43-46.

²¹ Hughes and Sharrock, *Philosophy of Social Research*, 3, 9.

²² This is the theological version of pure, trans-cultural and trans-epochal knowledge achieved by a pure reading of the sacred texts.

²³ This means, "Inquiry into the historical circumstances of knowledge". J. K. A. Smith, *The Fall of Interpretation: Philosophical Foundations for a Creational Hermeneutic* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 61-62.

²⁴ For Gadamer, the global demand of the Enlightenment to overcome all prejudices constitutes a new prejudice and obscures "an appropriate understanding of the finitude which dominates not only our humanity but also our historical consciousness." H. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, Revised ed. (New York: Continuum, 1989), 276.

²⁵ This makes hermeneutics – the need for negotiation of understanding between finite entities – an inescapable aspect of being human. Smith, 78-79, 150. Cf. J. H. Olthius, "On Worldviews," *CSR*, no. 14 (1985): 153-164; B. J. Walsh, "Worldviews, Modernity and Task of Christian College Education," *FD* Fall, no. 18 (1992): 13-35; and Part Two of J. K. A. Smith and S. R. Cudney, "Postmodern Freedom and the Growth of Fundamentalism: Was the Grand Inquisitor Right?," *SR* 25 (1996): 41-44.

competing relativistic epistemologies.²⁶ All it means is that “any exegetical approach is contextually coined”.²⁷

According to Smith, this also means no discourse is able to overcome its provincial nature and to deliver a normative interpretation for “to privilege one reading as normative would be to privilege one situationality or tradition over another”.²⁸

However, he overlooks the fact that texts are integral parts of specific traditionalities and those that generate the texts in question embody the legitimate reading conventions for their normative interpretations. Privileging them in their interpretation is the path towards correct understanding.²⁹

Below, we briefly explore how philosophical trends in Modernity and Postmodernity influenced sub-Saharan Africa. We also note developments in African biblical scholarship.

A.1. Modernity

We have already alluded to the possible origins of Modernity.³⁰ As with its origins, it is difficult to name a specific date for Modernity’s loss of normative status in the world. However, the proliferation of marginal voices today is clear testimony of the dismantling of the stranglehold of its philosophical canons.³¹

²⁶ Cf. S. Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class?* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980), 350. Also, see J. Derrida, *Spurs: Nietzsche’s Styles*, trans. Barbara Harlow (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1979), 53.

²⁷ Joseph Osei-Bonsu, *The Inculturation of Christianity in Africa*, ed. Johannes Buetler, Werner kahl, and Thomas Schmeller, *New Testament Studies in Contextual Exegesis* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2005), iii.

²⁸ Smith, 164.

²⁹ Cf. E. A. Nida, *Signs, Sense, Translation* (Roggebaai, Cape Town: The Bible Society of South Africa, 1984), 2-11.

³⁰ Cf. page 9.

³¹ Middleton and Walsh, 10-12. Cf. K. Gergen, *The Saturated Self: Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Life* (New York: Basis Books, 1991), 7.

In Dewey's³² evaluation, Modernity supplanted the pre-modern era on four fronts.

(1) It focussed its energies on the natural and the secular as opposed to the supernatural. (2) It substituted acquiescence to ecclesiastical authority with the observing and reflective individual. (3) It adopted belief in progress as its characteristic faith. (4) It endorsed empiricism as the method of progress.³³

The fundamental difference between Modernity and the medieval era relates to the understanding of nature. In medieval philosophy, the metaphysical governed the physical and ecclesiastical authorities were its arbiters. They prescribed epistemological standards and possessed the social authority to do so. In Modern philosophy, the physical was practically disengaged from metaphysical contingency and, through empirical observation and rational reflection, epistemological standards and social authority were in the hands of any observing and thinking man.³⁴

This marked the rise of scientific knowledge as the purest form of knowledge. Accordingly, scientific methodologies became the pathways to certain knowledge in various disciplines.³⁵ The fires of scientific inquiry were fanned by the rational liberties of the eighteenth century Enlightenment, leading to the industrial revolution.³⁶ The ascendancy of the market in the nineteenth century with its roots in the entrepreneurial spirit and the profit motive, "seen as the purpose and *raison d'être* of industrial and scientific progress", capped the ethos of progress by which Modernity was characterised.³⁷ This ethos was part of the imperialist expansion that

³² John Dewey was "perhaps the most representative intellectual proponent of the spirit of modernity in the North American context." Middleton and Walsh, 14.

³³ J. Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (New York: Henry Holt, 1929), 47-49.

³⁴ Middleton and Walsh, 14.

³⁵ Hughes and Sharrock, *Philosophy of Social Research*, 8-9, 10.

³⁶ For an in-depth treatment of this period, see C. L. Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1932).

³⁷ Middleton and Walsh, 17-19. Cf. R. L. Heilbroner, "The Economic Revolution," in *The Worldly Philosophers: The Lives and Times of the Great Economic Thinkers* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1961), chapter 2; and T. Sine, *Wild Hope: Crises Facing Human Community on the Threshold of the 21st Century* (Dallas: Word, 1991), 210.

saw European powers partition Africa within a space of about twenty-five years towards the end of the nineteenth century.³⁸

On the religious front, inquiry spawned reform movements that challenged the hegemony of Roman Catholic interpretation and the resurgence of the same absolutist tendencies in the dogmas of theological Scholasticism within seventeenth-century Protestantism. The Pietistic Movement challenged preoccupation with dogma at the expense of reformed lives.³⁹ Several missionary societies were formed and became instruments for foreign missions.⁴⁰ They operated alongside the institutional church without themselves being church organisations, and sent missionaries to plant churches in Africa, Asia and the Americas.⁴¹ This was the genesis of the Modern Missionary Movement.⁴²

The Modern Missionary Movement and imperialism shared the same epistemological presuppositions and, often, agenda. For instance, David Livingstone's missionary explorations of central Africa included a very strong element of empirical inquiry.⁴³

Hugh Goldie, one of the most linguistically able missionaries of the Old Calabar Mission of the nineteenth century, undertook Bible translation on the Modernistic

³⁸ D. G. Scanlon, ed, *Church, State and Education in Africa* (New York: Teacher's College Press, 1966), 3. Andrew Ross dates the Scramble for Africa within the decade 1885-1895. Andrew C. Ross, *David Livingstone: Mission and Empire* (London, England: Hambledon and London, 2002), 241.

³⁹ O. E. Costas, *The Church and Its Mission: A Shattering Critique from the Third World* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 1974), 158. Cf. W. A. Smalley, *Translation as Mission: Bible Translation in the Modern Missionary Movement. The Modern Missionary Era, 1792-1992: An Appraisal* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1991), x.

⁴⁰ J. F. A. Ajayi, *Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891* (London: Green and Co. Ltd, 1965), 8.

⁴¹ Costas, 158. Cf. L. J. Luzbetak, *The Church and Cultures: New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology* (MaryKnoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1988), 16.

⁴² 1792-1992 in keeping with the periodization of a series dedicated to appraising the movement although Roman Catholic missions in Africa predate the eighteenth century. Smalley, ix-x.

⁴³ His subjects of interest and industry included Geography, Geology and Mineralogy, Meteorology, Botany, Zoology, Astronomy, and Entomology. D. Livingstone, *Dr Livingstone's Cambridge Lectures: Together with a Prefatory Letter by the Rev. Professor Sedgwick* (Cambridge: Deighton Bell, 1858), 61-81. Cf. E. A. Nida, *Customs, Culture and Christianity* (London: Tyndale Press, 1954), 56-57; and Ajayi, xiii. Andrew Ross argues that the transformation of David Livingstone into the patron saint of liberal imperialism was a posthumous undertaking by imperialist statesmen and political commentators in Europe who needed moral justification and glorification for the British Empire. However, Livingstone also sought cultural, economic and religious transformation for African societies patterned after Modern Europe. Ross, 239, 243.

assumption that all grammar conformed to the same rules.⁴⁴ Armed with such linguistic theory, he reduced the Efik language to writing and translated the Efik New Testament with far-reaching consequences for education and the formation of the new elite of Nigeria.⁴⁵

Missionary education produced an African elite shaped by Enlightenment thought and European ways of life.⁴⁶ White settlers in southern Africa opposed these developments until after the First World War following support for them by the imperial government in London.⁴⁷ Ironically, missionary educated elites, inspired by concepts shaped by Enlightenment thought, created African nationalism and overthrew white rule. These elites continue to rule modern independent African states and perpetuate education systems predicated on Enlightenment thought. To a large extent, the scenario is not different in the churches.

This scenario and its undesirability is the subject of several publications by Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o. For example, *Decolonising the Mind* is a polemic against the choice of Afro-European (or Euro African) linguistic praxis for literature, theatre and fiction that amounts to twentieth-century plunder of Africa's mental treasures by Europeans. *Moving the Centre* is a collection of lectures, talks, etc., arguing that African cultures be freed from Eurocentricism, colonial legacies and Racism and for the decolonization of the African imagination. *Barrel of a Pen* is criticism of cultural repression by the neocolonial ruling regime in Kenya.

However, Lamin Sanneh argues that African epistemological resilience and creativity is underrated by the popular polemics of those who want to attribute all the

⁴⁴ H. Goldie, *Principles of Efik Grammar: With Specimen of the Language* (Edinburgh: Muir and Paterson, 1868), 18.

⁴⁵ Ajayi, 140, 165.

⁴⁶ For instance, David Livingstone sought to transform African society through commerce and Christianity. A. C. Ross, *Blantyre Mission and the Making of Modern Malawi* (Blantyre, Malawi: CLAIM, 1996), 16.

⁴⁷ For instance, Johnston, an imperial administrator, saw his role as to help exploit Africa as an obligation (cf. White man's burden') both for Africa's material betterment and the enrichment of the civilised world. H. Johnston, *The Backward Peoples and Our Relations with Them* (London: Oxford University Press, 1920), 42, 56, 59.

ills of Africa to its colonial and missionary history.⁴⁸ He contends that the translatability of Christianity in Africa has already happened.

He treats Christianity as a religious movement as opposed to Scripture or a dogmatic creedal system⁴⁹ and relativises theological particularity in order to focus on agency in Christian Missions. Translation of the Scriptures was a necessity for evangelistic purposes.⁵⁰ However, translation inevitably shifted agency from the missionary to the convert despite opinions and activities to the contrary by some missionaries.⁵¹ Local criticism of missionary theories and practices, the availability of the Scriptures in the vernacular, and nationalistic sentiment show that this process has transpired in Africa.⁵²

However, Sanneh does not demonstrate conclusively that wresting “the creative initiative from missionaries to the ‘Gospel’ and consequently to its African translators and assimilators”⁵³ has occurred to an extent that justifies his claim that translatability *has* happened although a case can be made for each of his three evidences for translatability. True, Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa spread through the agency of countless Africans struggling to understand the Bible in their own terms. However, as noted above, nationalistic sentiment was and still is partly shaped by ideas created by the Enlightenment. In addition, Enlightenment epistemology and non-African questions continue to shape the leaders, methodologies and often even content of several ecclesiastical and government institutions.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Sanneh, *Translating the Message*, 173-174.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 1, 193.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 62, 173; Lamin Sanneh, “‘They Stooped to Conquer’: Vernacular Translation and the Social-Cultural Factor,” *RAL* 23, no. 1 (1992): 106.

⁵² For Sanneh, nationalistic sentiment is a deeper effect of translatability making critical reflection to permeate vernacular societies beyond churches as vernacular revitalisation. Sanneh, *Translating the Message*, 172.

⁵³ T. S. Maluleke, “The Rediscovery of the Agency of Africans: An Emerging Paradigm of Post-Cold War and Post-Apartheid Black and African Theology,” *JTSA* 108 (2000): 32.

⁵⁴ V. Lukas, “Church History in an Ecumenical Perspective: Papers and Reports of an International Ecumenical Consultation Held in Basle October 12-17, 1981,” *EAOSS* 26 (1982): 1. Cf. M. E. Kashoki, “Indigenous Scholarship in African Universities: The Human Factor,” in *Development in Zambia*, ed. B. Turok (London: Zed Press, 1979), 170.

A.2. Postmodernity

As was the case with Modernity, it is not easy to establish when Postmodernity started. Middleton and Walsh argue that the demise of optimism in Modernity in the twentieth century was already prefigured in the nineteenth century.⁵⁵

Postmodernity may be defined as the collapse of 'myth' (Reason or Religion) as universal guarantor of Truth and emergence of a plurality of competing versions of the world.⁵⁶ In philosophical terms, Postmodernity 'started' when the critical tools of Modernity were extended to the examination of the examining subject, a process otherwise known as the deconstruction of the self.⁵⁷ The two world wars are often cited as key events in the demise of the progress motif of Modernity.⁵⁸

Towards the end of the twentieth century, Modernity was in radical decline as science was losing its role as arbiter of all knowledge and Modernity's legitimating myths were no longer believed with any conviction.⁵⁹ In politics and society, the demise of Modernity has led to "the postmodern fragmentation and tribalization of the globe."⁶⁰ Beliefs that once held sway began to be questioned and "worldview questions that once had some form of ultimate, faith-committed answers were re-opened."⁶¹ The foundation of certainty was severely polarized and with it, "the sense of being at home in a world we can understand and deal with".⁶²

⁵⁵ Middleton and Walsh, 23-24.

⁵⁶ Smith, 165. Cf. Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 8.

⁵⁷ Cf. B. Johnson, ed, *Freedom and Interpretation*, The Oxford Amnesty Lectures 1992 (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 3, and C. Norris, *The Truth About Postmodernism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 105.

⁵⁸ Middleton and Walsh, 23.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 25.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 24. Cf. T. C. Oden, *Two Worlds: Notes on the Death of Modernity in America and Russia* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1992); and J. Flax, *Thinking Fragments: Psychoanalysis, Feminism and Postmodernism in the Contemporary World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 5.

⁶¹ Middleton and Walsh, 26. For a related critique of Modern notions of intelligence, see D. Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), 40, 43.

⁶² L. Gilkey, *Reaping the Whirlwind: A Christian Interpretation of History* (New York: Seabury, 1976), 16.

Several new meta-narratives have emerged, all vying for legitimacy. The demythologization of the Modern myth⁶³ through a critical re-examination of its legitimating myths has become possible and fashionable. Deconstruction of the knowing subject has revealed that all knowing is constrained by the subject's epistemological framework.⁶⁴

For this reason, the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) concluded that the prevalence of European and North American theologies in African churches represented one form of cultural domination. They sought a "radical break in epistemology which makes commitment the first act of theology and engaged in critical reflection on the praxis of the reality of the Third world".⁶⁵ They concluded that the theologies of Europe and North America were culturally conditioned⁶⁶ and opted to theologize from their own perspectives.

In general, Postmodernism falls into two categories. Soft Postmodernism

rejects...dogmatic naturalism and antismaterialism; the reductionistic view of reason...limitation of knowledge to sense experience...meaningful use of language to those statements for which we can identify sense perceptions that would verify or falsify them [,] the type of naïve objectivity that denies the effect of historical and cultural situations...logical positivism, behaviourism, and all other artificially scientific approaches to reality.⁶⁷

Hard or extreme Postmodernism dogmatically legitimizes any perspective because all knowledge is contextually conditioned.⁶⁸ Further, the meaning that a hearer or

⁶³ A step further than, for example, Schleiermacher's 'demythologisation' of the Bible intended to advance hermeneutics from preoccupation with unearthing facts to finding existential meaning. A. C. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading* (London and New York: Harper Collins, 1992), 142.

⁶⁴ Middleton and Walsh, 31-32. Cf. N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 33-35, 51-53. However, see H. Gunkel, *Genesis*, trans. Mark E. Biddle (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1997), vii.

⁶⁵ S. Torres and V. Fabella, eds, *The Emergent Gospel: Theology from the Underside of History* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1978), 269.

⁶⁶ E.g. Schleiermacher's interlocutors were the 'cultured critics' of religion of his day. P. Frostin, *Liberation Theology in Tanzania and South Africa: A First World Interpretation* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1994), 6, 7-8.

⁶⁷ M. J. Erickson, *Postmodernizing the Faith: Evangelical Responses to the Challenge of Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1998), 16.

⁶⁸ Norris, 285.

reader finds in a statement is its meaning.⁶⁹ It is intolerant of any preferential stratification of perspectives.

C. S. Lewis poignantly decried the human tendency to see philosophical developments in terms of progress. In his estimation, nature yields new evidence when we ask new questions thereby compelling humanity to revise its understanding of reality.⁷⁰ However, this does not make the new understanding superior to the former. Therefore, a change of models [worldviews] is not necessarily progress from error to truth for each model is both a serious attempt to consider the phenomena known at a given time and a reflection of the prevalent psychology of an age.⁷¹

B. Postcolonial Identities in Africa⁷²

Postcolonialism is best understood as space for the masses in postcolonial societies to be themselves. In practice, postcolonial initiatives are only homogenous with respect to *who* (the once-colonized) is doing the activity and not *what* is being done.

Sugirtharajah calls this activity “an attempt to go ‘home,’ . . . a call to self-awareness, aimed at creating an awakening among people to their indigenous literary, cultural and religious heritage.” The people in question are those of the Third World whose “culture has been degraded and effaced from the colonial narratives”.⁷³

Postcolonialism and liberation hermeneutics share a common interpretative vocation: “de-ideologizing dominant interpretation, a commitment to the Other and distrust of totalizing tendencies.” However, they differ in that “liberation hermeneutics is still

⁶⁹ Erickson, 19.

⁷⁰ C. S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 222-223.

⁷¹ Ibid., 221-223.

⁷² The heading is derived from a book bearing the same title: Richard Werbner and Terence Ranger, eds, *Postcolonial Identities in Africa* (London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd, 1996).

⁷³ R. S. Sugirtharajah, *The Bible in the Third World: Precolonial, Colonial and Postcolonial Encounters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 177.

stuck with some of the vices of the modernistic project – excessive textualism, disparagement of both major and popular religions and homogenization of the poor”.⁷⁴ In contrast, Postcolonialism has moved on to reflection that seeks to realistically evaluate and incorporate colonial influence and thought.⁷⁵

Postcolonialism does not view the colonized as innocent and principled and former colonizers as uniformly greedy and responsible for all social evils. In addition, postcolonial theory offers space for the once-colonized to engage with the mass of knowledge which is produced on their behalf and which is in the domain of Euro-American interpretation as an act of reclamation, redemption and reaffirmation against past colonial and current neocolonizing tendencies.⁷⁶

Therefore, in “Postcolonial”, “post-” may mean “after”, “because of”, and even “inclusive of” the colonial. It may also mean explicit resistance and opposition, the anticolonial.⁷⁷ How, then, does Postcolonialism relate to Modernity and Postmodernity?

Modernity was the philosophical framework and cultural particularity of both the Modern Missionary Movement and Imperialism. Both projects were executed within an agenda of domination.⁷⁸ Sugirtharajah has characterized European colonization as “an aggressive ethnocentric imposition of one’s culture upon the ‘other’, the most powerful ideological construction of the last four or five centuries.”⁷⁹ This is largely true although ‘imposition’ is slightly misleading given that Africans often embraced Modernity by choice, often against the intentions of the colonizers.

In contrast, Postmodernity came into bloom in Europe and North America towards the end of the twentieth century, generally ‘after’ both colonialism and mission

⁷⁴ Ibid., 244.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 248-249. Cf. H. K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 36-39, 218.

⁷⁶ Sugirtharajah, 250.

⁷⁷ L. Hutcheon, “Colonialism and the Postcolonial Condition: Complexities Abounding,” *PMLA* 110 (1995): 10. Cf. A. Mbembe, “Provisional Notes on the Postcolony,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 62, no. 1 (1992): 5.

⁷⁸ G. ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise: African Christians in Europe* (Cardiff: Cardiff Academic Press, 1998), 83.

⁷⁹ Sugirtharajah, 3-4. However, whereas Sugirtharajah’s views may be true for India, colonizers in South Africa initially opposed the Europeanization of non-whites.

within the framework of the civilizing mandate. As such, it has lacked a specific strategy for bearing it to the continent of Africa. This has meant that any assimilation of elements of the postmodern critique of Modernity in African reflection is not a consequence of a deliberate agenda by foreigners.

However, from the African point of view, Postmodernity is providing space on the 'global table' for indigenous voices from Africa. Quite unintentionally, perhaps much like the translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular, a Western philosophical development has provided the justification to Westerners for African and other marginal voices in the world.

Below we summarize postcolonial developments in Africa on social-political and academic fronts. These will provide an adequate framework for our discussion of hermeneutics because as a worldview-related activity, interpretation falls under sociology, of which politics is a part. As reflection, it falls under critical scholarship.

B.1. Social-Political Postcolonial Identities in Africa

To the African, Postcolonialism does not mark the end of imperialism. Political independence has often meant a change of the hands in effective or mediated command. However, late capitalist domination by Western powers is pervasive and makes the sovereignty of many African states virtually political fiction. Territorial imperialism has given way to neo-colonialism.⁸⁰

Within this reality, postcolonial subjects are making and finding space for reflection and articulation. In India, the most forceful indigenous voice is "driven by diasporic intellectuals as literary critics who are, in turn, inspired by Postmodern European thought".⁸¹ Strictly then, this is the voice of those who live in the Diaspora.⁸²

⁸⁰ Richard Werbner, "Multiple Identities, Plural Arenas," in *Postcolonial Identities in Africa*, 5.

⁸¹ Ibid., 6.

⁸² R. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 160-163. For the problematic of the term "Diaspora" as related to Africans, see Haar, 77-88, and G. Shepperson, "African Diaspora Concept and Context," in *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*, ed. J. E. Harris (Washington: Howard University Press, 1993).

Diasporic intellectuals may still reflect from the memory of their colonial past.⁸³

However, their circumstances as migrant Africans mean that their praxis is different from that of the once-colonized who is still in Africa.⁸⁴

Colonialism re-defined ethnic, cultural and social-political reality in Africa. By imposing new national identities based on arbitrarily created borders, it drastically altered the identities, values and associations of the societies involved. In fact, the average African is in the process of re-negotiating his or her terms of self-reference in an attempt to accommodate the new realities.⁸⁵

In these circumstances, those with greater financial or organizational resources seem to shape the new societies.⁸⁶ Meta-narratives that facilitate a sense of belonging emerge as new foundations for self-identity.⁸⁷ Sometimes, there is even retrogression to pre-colonial meta-narratives including ethnic associations.⁸⁸ The last phenomenon is in part responsible for what has been called the 're-traditionalisation' of contemporary Africa that includes revival of African religion, 'traditionalisation' of the Christian churches in Africa, greater use of local and national languages and 'regression' to traditional cultural practices.⁸⁹ This ethnic resurgence is also known as tribalism and often leads to the view by some observers that ethnicity is the political *ultima ratio* in African politics.⁹⁰

For various reasons, Africa is increasingly experiencing marginalization on the international scene.⁹¹ This leaves her at the mercy of the growing influence of the

⁸³ Haar, 83.

⁸⁴ Ibid., ii-iii.

⁸⁵ Werbner, "Multiple Identities," 8.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 8-9.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 8. Cf. Richard Werbner, *Tears of the Dead: The Social Biography of an African Family* (Edinburgh and Washington, DC.: Edinburgh University Press and Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 159.

⁸⁸ Werbner and Ranger, eds, *Postcolonial Identities*, 1, 10.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 32-33.

⁹⁰ Patrick Chabal, "The African Crisis: Context and Interpretation," in *Postcolonial Identities in Africa*, 32-33.

⁹¹ Cf. A. Adedeji, ed, *Africa within the World: Beyond Dispossession and Dependence* (London: Zed Books Ltd, 1993).

West and Western-dominated international financial institutions.⁹² Consequently, postcolonial African space, even as recognized within Postmodernity, does not guarantee Africa an audience outside the continent for her reflection and articulation. There, her voice is weak and her concerns rarely perceived as deserving priority.⁹³

B.2. Postcolonial Trends and Trajectories in African Biblical Scholarship

Postcolonial biblical scholarship in Africa is related to colonialism and the Modern Missionary Movement. Not surprisingly, we find the seeds of an apologetic for African cultures and religious practices within the same critical consciousness that fostered nationalistic sentiment and agitation for political self-governance towards the end of the colonial era:

The beginning of modern biblical studies in Africa . . . was in response to the widespread condemnation of African religion and culture in the Christian missionaries of the 19th and 20th centuries. African religion and culture were condemned as demonic and immoral and therefore to be exterminated before Christianity could take root in Africa.⁹⁴

This ‘apologetic’ generally attempts to establish historical continuities between Africa and Israel. J. J. Williams sought “to illustrate a possible physical contact with the ancient Hebrews”⁹⁵ and thereby to establish a historical basis for borrowing of ideas and practices. He compared the vocalisation and etymologies of the Ashanti

⁹² Chabal, 34-35.

⁹³ Ibid., 36.

⁹⁴ J. S. Ukpong, “Developments in Biblical Interpretation in Africa: Historical and Hermeneutical Directions,” in *The Bible in Africa: Transactions, Trajectories and Trends*, ed. Gerald O. West and Musa W. Dube (Leiden, Boston and Köln: Brill, 2000), 12. Others want this assertion to be qualified. Cf. A. C. Ross, “John Philip 1775-1851: Standing for Autonomy and Racial Equality,” in *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement*, ed. G. H. Anderson (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1994).

⁹⁵ Ukpong, “Developments in Biblical Interpretation,” 13.

language (Ghana) and Hebrew, and similarities between the worship of deities apart from Yahweh in the Old Testament and Ashanti worship of God and divinities.⁹⁶

Wambudta suggested that a linguistic analysis of some African languages could prove useful for the clarification of “hitherto unclear meanings of certain words in the MT.”⁹⁷ To illustrate his point, he compared the etymologies of a list of nouns and verbs in an ethnic group called *Nga* (also *Anga*) of Plateau State, Nigeria with alleged corresponding nouns and verbs in the Hebrew language.⁹⁸

Magdel Le Roux’s research has explored possible historical continuities between Jews and ethnic groups in Eastern and Southern Africa.⁹⁹ These efforts are apparently fuelled by the fact that, “many indigenous groups in Africa have manners and customs with a Semitic resonance.”¹⁰⁰ For instance, qualitative analysis of the oral traditions of the Balemba or Lemba, the “Black Jews of Southern Africa,” led le Roux to conclude that evidence suggesting historical continuity does exist.¹⁰¹

Williams’ claims were predicated on extrinsic resemblance.¹⁰² Le Roux’s work is predicated on findings from qualitative social research and genetic research.

Wambudta’s work is predicated on linguistic analysis.¹⁰³ Whatever one makes of these findings, the African clearly is epistemologically and culturally at home in the

⁹⁶ Ibid. Cf. J. J. Williams, *Hebrewisms of West Africa: From the Nile to Niger with the Jews* (London: 1930; reprint, New York: Biblo and Tanner, 1967), 35; and D. N. Wambudta, “Hebrewisms of West Africa: An Ongoing Search in the Correlation between the Old Testament and African Weltaanschauung,” *OJT* 2 (1987): 33-41.

⁹⁷ D. N. Wambudta, “Hebrewisms in West Africa,” *BOTSA* 11 (2001): 9.

⁹⁸ Ibid. Cf. D. N. Wambudta, *A Study of Conversion among the Angas of Plateau State of Nigeria with Emphasis on Christianity* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1991).

⁹⁹ E.g. Magdel le Roux, “Are the Balemba in Southern Africa a Lost Tribe of Israel?,” *BOTSA* 11 (2001): 2-8.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.: 2.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.: 4. Cf. A. Spurdle and T. Jenkins, “Y Chromosome Probe P49a Detects Complex *PvaII* Haplotypes and Many New *TaqI* Haplotypes in Southern African Populations,” *AJHG* 50 (1992); A. B. Spurdle and T. Jenkins, “The Origins of the Lemba, ‘Black Jews’ of Southern Africa: Evidence from P12f2 and Other Y-Chromosome Markers,” *AJHG* 59 (1996); and M. G. Thomas and others, “Y Chromosomes Travelling South: The Cohen Modal Haplotype and the Origins of the Lemba - the ‘Black Jews of Southern Africa’,” *AJHG* 66 (2000).

¹⁰² Ukpong, “Developments in Biblical Interpretation,” 13.

¹⁰³ For possible support, see B. K. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 1, 1.4.1a.

biblical texts, particularly the OT.¹⁰⁴ This familiarity generated cautions by some early missionaries to Africa that Africans should have restricted access to the Old Testament for fear that they would uncritically adopt Jewish-ness as Christianity.¹⁰⁵

This “African predilection for the Old Testament”¹⁰⁶ has been the subject of many debates among Christian workers and scholars in Africa. Some have questioned aspects of this predilection but the African’s epistemological familiarity with the Old Testament environment remains undisputed.¹⁰⁷

Within this predilection, some scholars focus on exploiting similarities between Africa and Israel within the framework of Comparative Religion. This centres the discussion on epistemological and cultural continuities in terms of worldview, the Old Testament atmosphere that makes the African context a kindred atmosphere.¹⁰⁸ Such studies abound and demonstrate striking similarities without confirming or undermining the argument for historical continuity.¹⁰⁹ Chapter 2 is a summary of some of the perceived similarities. This discourse is the basis for further research in the postcolony.

Other scholars consider these findings as a *praeparatio evangelica*, a fertile ground for the gospel. Such studies help to articulate the value of African culture and religion for the appropriation of Christianity and are foundational to all biblical studies that link the biblical text to the African context.¹¹⁰

There has been a marked shift in the period roughly covering the 1970s – 90s, from an apologetic and a polemical stance to a proactive stance in biblical studies in Africa:

¹⁰⁴ Cf. G. LeMarquand, “New Testament Exegesis in (Modern) Africa,” in *The Bible in Africa*, 72.

¹⁰⁵ G. E. Philips, *The Old Testament in the World Church* (Guildford: Lutterworth, 1942), 6-10. Cf. B. Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 277.

¹⁰⁶ Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, 145.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. H. W. Turner, *Profile through Preaching* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh House Press, 1965), 21.

¹⁰⁸ K. A. Dickson, “The Old Testament and African Theology,” *GBT* 4, no. 4 (1973): 141-184.

¹⁰⁹ E.g. J. S. Ukpong, *Sacrifice, African and Biblical: A Comparative Study of Ibibio and Levitical Sacrifices* (Rome: Urbaniana University Press, 1987).

¹¹⁰ Ukpong, “Developments in Biblical Interpretation,” 14.

The African context is used as a resource in the hermeneutic encounter with the Bible, and the religious studies framework characteristic of the former phase gives way to a more theological framework. Two main approaches, which can be identified as inculturation and liberation crystallize.¹¹¹

Inculturation studies attempt to articulate Christianity in African symbols and idiom.¹¹² Biblical studies undertake inculturation either as “*Africa-in-the-bible* studies” or as “*evaluative*” studies. Liberation studies represent efforts to make theology show concern for secular issues. Its approaches to biblical interpretation include *liberation hermeneutics*, *black theology* and *feminist hermeneutics*.¹¹³

Africa-in-the-bible studies seek to expose the presence of Africa and African peoples in the Bible and the significance of such presence. They aim to identify “Africa’s influence on the history of Ancient Israel and Africa’s contribution to the history of salvation, as well as to correct negative interpretations of some biblical texts on Africa”.¹¹⁴

Evaluative studies seek to draw theological consequences from the encounter between African religion and culture and the Bible. Starting with similarities and dissimilarities between African religion and the Bible, they interpret the biblical texts with a view to facilitate the communication of the biblical message within Africa and to evolve a new understanding of Christianity that is both African and biblical. Generally, they use the historical critical method for analysis of the biblical text, and anthropological or sociological approaches for analysing the African situation.¹¹⁵ According to Ukpog, the *Evaluative* is the most common approach in biblical studies in Africa today.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Osei-Bonsu, 19.

¹¹³ Ukpog, “Developments in Biblical Interpretation,” 14.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 14-15. Cf. C. Dop, *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality?* (Westport: Lawrence Hill, 1974), and C. Williams, *The Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race from 4500 B C to 2000 A D* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1976).

¹¹⁵ Ukpog, “Developments in Biblical Interpretation,” 16-17.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.: 19.

B.3. Education and Biblical Scholarship in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Problematic for African Biblical Scholarship

In this section, we highlight the challenge for African biblical scholarship by giving overviews of the history of education and the current state of biblical scholarship in sub-Saharan Africa. We also state the problematic of this thesis and its goal.

There are three sub-sections. The first is a general overview of education for Africans under colonialism and the Modern Missionary Movement. It shows that in structure, epistemological medium and goals, education was predominantly Eurocentric. The second is an overview of the current state of biblical scholarship in sub-Saharan Africa. It shows that biblical scholarship is still conducted through Western paradigms in spite of increasing recognition of the need for indigenous-based approaches. The third is a discussion of the problematic in African biblical scholarship and the hypothesis and goal of this thesis project.

B.3.1. Summary of educational policies and dynamics in imperial expansion and the Modern Missionary Movement

In section A, we noted the Modern framework for the formation of missionary societies in Europe. We also noted the common epistemological framework and, often, agenda between the Modern Missionary Movement and imperialism.¹¹⁷ In keeping with these, mission schools strove to convert attendees to Christianity, but also to European values and ways of thinking.¹¹⁸ Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's extensive writings on the colonisation of the African mind illustrate the extent to which this project succeeded.¹¹⁹

The hegemony of Enlightenment thought during this period is evident in the epistemological tools for biblical translation, ironically a targeted activity for the

¹¹⁷ Cf. page 15.

¹¹⁸ Lewis H. Gann, *Central Africa: The Former British States* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc, 1971), 77-78.

¹¹⁹ See page 10, note 6 and page 16.

inclusion of African ways in the Modern Missionary Movement. Not even the Protestant principle “to supply every man with the Holy Scriptures in his own mother-tongue”¹²⁰ was able to prevent the domination of the missionary’s epistemological presuppositions on the translation process.¹²¹

For example, despite admitting that ‘in idiom and everyday usage, Bantu languages are more closely allied to Semitic than Indo-European tongues’,¹²² Hugh Goldie translated the Bible into *Efik* using Indo-European linguistic theory.¹²³ Reports during this period of the inadequacies of African languages for carrying the Christian message indicate the critical failures of several missionaries to come to terms with the logic of African languages.¹²⁴

Two consequences of this hegemony are the textualization (privileging written forms over oral forms) of the Word of God and the historicization of biblical religion. Textualization made the written word the broker for God’s revelation and analysis of the printed word the way to discern and experience God’s purpose.¹²⁵

In Africa, textualization signalled the beginning of the displacement of African epistemological logic rooted in the wealth of associations linked to orality and interaction with other human beings¹²⁶ and replacement with Western epistemological logic.¹²⁷ Consequently, “interpretation has become a literary activity

¹²⁰ *Have Ye Never Read?: A Popular Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society 1910-1913* (London: The Bible House, 1913), 125.

¹²¹ Cf. Misheck Nyirenda, “A Critical Evaluation of Epistemological Presuppositions in the Hermeneutical Practices of Nineteenth Century European Missions to the African Continent as Demonstrated in the Efik and Nyanja Bible Translation Projects” (Master of Theology [Research], University of Edinburgh, 2001).

¹²² H. Goldie, *Calabar and Its Mission: With Additional Chapters by Rev. John Taylor Dean* (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1901), 301-302.

¹²³ Cf. Nyirenda, “Critical Evaluation”, 49, notes 170 and 171. To be fair, there were notable exceptions (e.g. Scott and Dutch Reformed Church missionaries in Nyasaland and some missionaries to the Xhosa in South Africa) where missionaries recognized rather early that using Indo-European linguistic theory for understanding African languages was fraught with problems.

¹²⁴ Sugirtharajah, 58.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 68.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 69.

¹²⁷ “The effect was not merely one of undermining African socio-cultural systems and institutions; its most pernicious effect was to cause the African to look to Western Man for moral, spiritual, technical and intellectual guidance and leadership”. Kashoki, 172.

confined to the urban educated class, and a private activity that effectively replaces the oral transmission of story”.¹²⁸

Historicization meant a heightened concept of biblical religion as a historical faith according to Western historiography. With this shift, Western historical critical methods of interpretation, including their preoccupation with source and context, replaced the narrative approach.¹²⁹

The quest for precision in articulation led to theological systems inspired by systematic theology.¹³⁰ In biblical studies, this had the effect of diminishing the holistic nature of biblical religion to issues of dogma and personal faith.¹³¹

We noted, however, that mission and imperialism as domination did not progress without resistance.¹³² Ukpong attributes this resistance to the familiarity of the biblical material to African systems of thought and practice in spite of the protestations of the Christian churches to which they belonged.¹³³ Before we proceed, we give an overview of the current state of biblical scholarship in sub-Saharan Africa.

B.3.2. Overview of the current state of biblical scholarship in sub-Saharan Africa

We limit ourselves to the current state of biblical scholarship because of the relative availability of data for the sector. This excludes a host of other arguably more critical forces of Christianity in Africa¹³⁴ including several lower level training institutions, often unaccredited and offering qualifications below undergraduate degree level, that

¹²⁸ Sugirtharajah, 69.

¹²⁹ Sugirtharajah, 71. Cf. V. K. Chari, *Sanskrit Criticism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1990), 9.

¹³⁰ Sugirtharajah, 72. Cf. Chapter 3, section B.1, esp. page 74, note 89.

¹³¹ R. A. Horsley, “Submerged Biblical Histories and Imperial Biblical Studies,” in *The Postcolonial Bible*, ed. R. S. Sugirtharajah, *The Bible and Postcolonialism*, 1 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 154.

¹³² Cf. Sanneh’s thesis, pages 16-17.

¹³³ Ukpong, “Rereading the Bible,” 3.

¹³⁴ Cf. Holter, 9.

are the driving force behind the phenomenal growth of Christianity in Africa, but whose data is difficult to access.¹³⁵ However, our narrow aim is to *demonstrate* that the framework for institutionalised biblical scholarship in Africa is still Western.

For the sake of context, we must mention briefly the progress of the civilising agenda in relation to education in general. Sanneh argued that the translation of the Bible into vernacular languages released African agency in theological reflection and practice and led to the growth of nationalistic sentiment, leading to political independence.¹³⁶ Not surprisingly, there is a direct correlation between national independence and numeric growth of both state-driven and church-related academic institutions.¹³⁷

Generally, post-independence education intended to facilitate national development and the Africanisation and contextualization of politics, commercial control and religion.¹³⁸ However, according to Kashoki, three features and consequences of Western education undermined these goals. (1) “The mechanical, uncritical or essentially imitative manner in which Western education has generally been acquired by the African; (2) the preoccupation with employment oriented...education in most African countries; and (3) the consequences of Western theories on African thought and African scholarship.”¹³⁹

Consequently, mastery of Western forms of knowledge hardly led to “own mental creative processes”. At best, it led to maintenance and even propagation of such knowledge in the academy as opposed to being “a prelude to, and a preparation for meeting, the challenges and tests that lie ahead in the crucible of life”. As a result, there is a lack of “indigenous scholarship, of a kind to be considered truly original”, in spite of impressive numbers of African graduates at all levels and from “some of

¹³⁵ E.g. The Accrediting Council for Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA) has undertaken a systematic collection of information on theological colleges and seminaries in Africa. Ibid., 45, note 12. However, this researcher’s experience from Zambia is that the extent of activity in theological education out with this database is larger than that included in it.

¹³⁶ Cf. page 17.

¹³⁷ Holter identifies the 1960s to 70s, the decade when most African colonies attained political and ecclesiastical independence, as the period that saw “rapid growth of theological seminaries and university departments of religion throughout the continent, and also a sudden wave of publications on Africa and the OT”. Holter, 10, 45.

¹³⁸ J. F. A. Ajayi, L. K. H. Goma, and A. G. Johnson, *The African Experience with Higher Education* (Accra: Association of African Universities, 1996), 76-143.

¹³⁹ Kashoki, 172.

the world's most renowned academic institutions".¹⁴⁰ This scenario is eerily similar to that in biblical scholarship.

Explosive growth during the last four or five decades¹⁴¹ of theological seminaries and departments of religion at universities,¹⁴² including some church-related universities, and the increase of Africans studying abroad¹⁴³ has seen a dramatic rise in the numbers of Africans involved in biblical scholarship. Efforts to contextualize scholarship have not been lacking and African cultures and traditional religions are the focus of much research and teaching.

We have already noted the shift in biblical scholarship from an apologetic stance within the framework of Comparative Religion to proactive approaches.¹⁴⁴ In OT scholarship,¹⁴⁵ this meant research in inculturation hermeneutical approaches "where the relationship between the texts of the OT and the context of Africa were elaborated".¹⁴⁶

Holter also identifies an increasing trend, during the 1980s and 90s, towards "more traditional exegetical approaches", those that adopt the stance of the objective or culturally anonymous interpreter.¹⁴⁷ In his estimation, this trend reflects a "conscious understanding of what it means to do OT scholarship in Africa: the responsibility for doing both historical studies of the text and the encounter between the text and the contemporary context".¹⁴⁸ However, although we share his view of what OT

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 170, 173.

¹⁴¹ Holter's book only goes up to the 1990s and he appropriately refers to "the recent three to four decades". Holter, 44. Though we lack fresh data for trends since the 1990s, nothing suggests that the growth has abated.

¹⁴² Departments of religion typically are found in Anglophone African universities, which tend to follow the open tradition of British universities to include departments of religious studies. Ibid.

¹⁴³ For example, attaining higher degrees in the field of OT often meant studying in Europe or the USA during the 1960s and 70s. Ibid., 12.

¹⁴⁴ See pages 19-23. Cf. G. O. West, "Mapping African Biblical Interpretation," in *Interpreting the New Testament in Africa*, ed. Mary N. Getui, Tinyiko Maluleke, and Justin Ukpong (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2001), 94.

¹⁴⁵ Focus on the Old Testament reflects the fact that inculturation hermeneutics in Africa is largely inspired by the discourse of African predilection for the Old Testament. Mugambi links this predilection especially to the Old Testament and the synoptic gospels. J. N. K. Mugambi, "Foundations for an African Approach to Biblical Hermeneutics," in *Interpreting the New Testament in Africa*, 16.

¹⁴⁶ Holter, 11.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 20-22.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 21.

scholarship in Africa should include, it is not clear how adopting a stance of the 'objective or culturally anonymous interpreter' aids such scholarship. Rather, it appears to perpetuate the myth of Modernity that such a stance is possible.

There is often a gap between the needs of ordinary African Christians and the modes provided by scholars trained in the western tradition of biblical scholarship. For Holter, this is partly because "questions emerging from cultural and social concerns in Africa only to some extent are allowed into the interpretation of the OT".¹⁴⁹

Ukpong goes further and attributes the gap to the exclusion of the African's "conceptual frame of reference".¹⁵⁰ In other words, the gap is because of the exclusion of epistemological, socio-cultural and existential African realities at the methodological level, as well as exclusion of 'questions emerging from cultural and social concerns in Africa'.¹⁵¹

We see this exclusion in the apprenticeship to Western methodologies, scholarly traditions and even curricula in African institutions during the 1960s, 70s, and we suspect, to date.¹⁵² We also see it in the blatantly imitative-of-European-and-American-scholarship nature of South African biblical scholarship from its inception about 50 years ago to the present.¹⁵³

Ukpong calls a biblical hermeneutic that includes the African's conceptual frame of reference 'inculturation biblical hermeneutic' or for short 'inculturation hermeneutic'. It makes the African and his or her socio-cultural context the *subject* of interpretation.¹⁵⁴ It demands awareness of reading from within your own

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 16. Abogunrin also cites a feeling of inferiority to the massive western tradition because of such training leading to a sense among some to neglect their African context and champion western scholarship. S. O. Abogunrin, "Biblical Research in Africa: The Task Ahead," *AJBS* 1, no. 1 (1986): 13.

¹⁵⁰ Ukpong, "Rereading the Bible," 4.

¹⁵¹ Essentially, this has entailed reading the biblical material *through* foreign grids. Ibid.

¹⁵² Holter, 11. Cf. A. G. Newing, "A Study of Old Testament Curricula in Eastern and Central Africa," *ATJ* 3, no. 1 (1970), Newing's late 1960s analysis of OT studies in the universities and theological seminaries throughout Eastern and Central Africa vis-à-vis programmes and textbooks.

¹⁵³ F. Deist, "South African Old Testament Studies and the Future," *JOTSSA* 5, no. 3 (1992): 311-319.

¹⁵⁴ "This is different from making another context the subject of interpretation and then applying the result in the African context. It is also different from reading the context into the biblical text. Interpretation is a complex process. It involves an *interpreter* in a certain *context* making meaning of a *text* using a specific *conceptual framework* and its *procedure*. Every interpretation process has the above five components of interpreter, context, text, conceptual framework and procedure." Ukpong, "Rereading the Bible," 7.

‘conceptual framework’, defined as the “mental construct within which exegetes are trained, into which they grow and with which they operate”,¹⁵⁵ and culture.

According to Barton’s summary,¹⁵⁶ Ukpong’s inculturation hermeneutic focuses on the ‘reader’ understood as ‘reader-in-context’, “who *consciously* takes his/her socio-cultural context as a point of departure in reading, and who is part and parcel of the Christian community whose world-view and life experience he/she shares”.¹⁵⁷ The interpreter is “someone who has acquired knowledge, experience, and the insights of the[ir] culture and is also capable of viewing it critically”.¹⁵⁸

B.3.3. The problematic of our research project

In the light of the discussion above, we can now state the nature and aims of our research project and the hypothesis that guides it. In order to do so, it is necessary to state what we do not assume and aim to do.

We do not assume that it is possible to distance ourselves entirely from our enculturation¹⁵⁹ in both our presuppositions and methods. All exegesis is from particular perspectives.¹⁶⁰ Therefore, scholars ought to engage critically the nature and contribution of their enculturation to their scholarship.

Further, there ought to be dialogue among enculturation-conscious scholars. However, for such dialogue to be meaningful, participants should read texts using methodologies that reflect their realities, not borrowed ones.¹⁶¹ In addition,

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. page 2, note 5 above.

¹⁵⁷ Ukpong, “Rereading the Bible,” 5.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ A term from the social sciences, it refers to the process by which a person is introduced to and gradually learns and grows into a particular culture. Osei-Bonsu, 19.

¹⁶⁰ Ukpong, “Rereading the Bible,” 6; F. Deist, “Again: Method(s) of Exegesis. Reflections on Text and Textuality,” *JOTSSA* 1 (1983): 85; “South African Old Testament Studies,” 314; I. J. Mosala, *Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing House, 1989), 13; John Goldingay, *Approaches to Old Testament Interpretation*, Updated ed. (Leicester, England: Apollos, 1990), 18; and Osei-Bonsu, iii.

¹⁶¹ Cf. Ukpong, “Rereading the Bible,” 5; Deist, “South African Old Testament Studies,” 314.

approaches developed in different conceptual frameworks and socio-cultural realities must be respected equally.¹⁶²

We assume the historicity of the biblical material in keeping with the epistemological conventions of the societies responsible for it.¹⁶³ Based on this, we do not support hermeneutical approaches that substitute the realities in the texts with those of the reader.¹⁶⁴

In this project, the Zambian research data and the biblical data represent interpretations of the Scriptures from two contexts, human communities that are subjects of interpretation.¹⁶⁵ As such, the interpretations in the data reflect epistemological associations based on these respective conceptual frameworks.

The researcher intends to establish the correlations between texts and interpretations as a person who is constrained by particular socio-cultural realities and operating from a definite epistemological framework. We employ qualitative research methods and historical criticism to establish these correlations with an understanding that the methods and our use of them are not acultural. All this means that our findings will be limited and qualified at several levels in keeping with all human inquiry.¹⁶⁶

The goal of the project is to compare the conceptual frameworks in the Zambian research data and that in the biblical data with a view to identify a basis for Zambian and therefore Bantu and African hermeneutical methods.¹⁶⁷ The foundational hypothesis is that the African conceptual framework and that in the Old Testament bear striking parallels, which are the reason that Africans find the Old Testament in particular and the Bible in general to be a kindred atmosphere. In that the Zambian research data is from sub-Saharan Africa and the biblical data from the Old

¹⁶² Cf. Ukpong, "Rereading the Bible," 5; Deist, "South African Old Testament Studies," 315, 317.

¹⁶³ C. H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1987), 236-237; G. O. West, "Some Parameters of the Hermeneutic Debate in the South African Context," *JTSA* 80 (1992): 4-5; and David Tracy, *Plurality and Ambiguity: Hermeneutics, Religion, Hope* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987), 79.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Ukpong, "Rereading the Bible," 5.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*: 6.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Pages 12-13.

¹⁶⁷ For a history, continuing tensions, and a basis for continuity between a 'Bantu' and 'African' conceptual framework on the one hand, and, on other hand, the plurality of socio-cultural realities in the communities of sub-Saharan Africa, see pages 37-39 below.

Testament, the research project also hopes to validate this hypothesis through a comparison of the epistemologies extrapolated from the two sets of data.

We have established that Modernism was the predominant philosophical environment in 19th and 20th century Europe and therefore of the protagonists of imperial expansion and missions from Europe to Africa during the same period. Its epistemological method was empiricism, the 'scientific method'.

Imperialism and missions wittingly and unwittingly led to the distortion of African self-identities and the plunder of African mental treasures in exchange for Eurocentric culture, philosophy and practice. However, translating the Bible into the vernacular unleashed forces of African agency in both the church and society at large. Nevertheless, Enlightenment thought continues to flourish in sub-Saharan Africa.

The African in the Postcolony is in the process of re-negotiating new realities in self-identity and philosophical orientation. This process is multi-faceted and includes retrogression to pre-colonial meta-narratives.

In biblical scholarship, this process has generated diverse approaches. Initial approaches were apologetic in nature. Some sought to establish Africa's historical continuity with the Bible. Others sought to draw attention to socio-cultural and philosophical parallels between Africans and the people in the Bible. Subsequent approaches seek to exploit Africa's presence in the Bible and African socio-cultural and philosophical realities in the service of Africans and to be the basis for Africa's contribution to biblical scholarship.

The latter generally use historical critical approaches and social research theory. These constitute the most common approach in biblical studies in Africa today. Approaches that seek to exploit the Bible as a basis for addressing the issues of oppression, poverty and marginalisation in society pursue liberation hermeneutics.

Chapter 2: Continuities between African Cultures and the Cultures in the Hebrew Bible

This chapter is a summary of some of the key elements of the discourse in Comparative Religions regarding worldview affinities between African and biblical, particularly Old Testament societies. The discourse was prefigured in the reactions of Africans to biblical texts during the early days of Modern missions.¹ It developed as an apologetic for African cultures and religious practices within the same consciousness responsible for nationalistic sentiment and agitation for political self-governance towards the end of the colonial era.²

However, critical analysis of the sources for this profile reveal three features that qualify it: (1) theoretical and methodological issues that led to generalisations and de-contextualization of religio-cultural realities and practices; (2) articulation of the concepts in European philosophical categories; and (3) interpretation of African realities using Christian concepts.

Following the example of E. W. Smith, the sources assume key categories, belief in a Supreme Being, a sense of dynamic power, and localised kinship focus on ancestral spirits; and a key tenet of liberal Christian theology, that God has revealed himself in nature as accessed by reason, therefore to Africans prior to any knowledge of Christianity.³

Smith's theological framework for his work has led some to hesitate from treating his 'African ideas of God' as 'firm evidence' of a universal belief in God in Africa or uncritically as "source material for a hierarchical phenomenological typology of religious beliefs held throughout Africa".⁴ E. G. Parrinder, a student of Smith, continued in the tradition of identifying typological classifications for making sense

¹ Cf. page 26.

² Cf. page 24.

³ E. W. Smith, *African Beliefs and Christian Faith: An Introduction to Theology for African Students, Evangelists and Pastors* (London: The United Society for Christian Literature, 1936), 29; ed., *African Ideas of God: A Symposium* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1950), 34.

⁴ James L. Cox, *A Guide to the Phenomenology of Religion: Key Figures, Formative Influences and Subsequent Debates* (London and New York: T & T Clark International, 2006), 146.

of West African religions.⁵ He emphasized the living nature of religions and the need to study them as insiders within the framework of comparative religions, synchronic study aimed at enhancing understanding of living religious communities.⁶ Later, as evident in Andrew Walls' approach, religious studies became a distinct area of study outwith divinity and social sciences.⁷ Even later, as evident in Ninian Smart's approach and through 'methodological agnosticism,' "religion and religions [constitute] appropriate objects for detached, scientific analysis".⁸ Typologies are re-constituted as 'dimensions of religion', "pragmatic tools aimed at promoting understanding of the 'various ways in which human beings conceive of themselves and act in the world'".⁹

Scholars within the Comparative Religion framework were challenging explanations of differences between cultures and societies based on evolutionist theories,¹⁰ leading to distortions of African religions and cultures "perpetrated by early missionaries, anthropologists, ethnologists and colonial administrators".¹¹ Following the example of white liberal theologians,¹² they portrayed 'African Traditional Religion' in theological categories to 'highlight' elements held in common with Christianity.¹³ They also, following Parrinder,¹⁴ abstracted a 'common Africanness' from historical

⁵ These included supreme being; chief divinities (generally non-human); the cult of ancestors; and powers associated with charms and amulets. Cox, 148.

⁶ Cox, 150-153. Like Smith, studying as an 'insider' entails a measure of methodological empathy.

⁷ Ibid., 154.

⁸ Ibid., 160.

⁹ Ibid., 164-165.

¹⁰ Frieder Ludwig and Afe Adogame, "Introduction: Historiography and European Perceptions of African Religious History," in *European Traditions in the Study of Religion in Africa*, ed. Frieder Ludwig and Afe Adogame (Wiesbaden: Harrossowitz Verlag, 2004), 9.

¹¹ Cox, 167.

¹² "These dropped the *vera/falsa religio* dichotomy of traditional Christian orthodoxy, and postulated on various theological grounds that non-Christian religions were also proper religions, permitted, or even ordained by God, and with at least some function in the divine economy, and some salvific efficacy." Jan G. Platvoet, "From Object to Subject: A History of the Study of the Religions of Africa," in *The Study of Religions in Africa: Past, Present and Prospects*, ed. Jan Platvoet, James Cox, and Jacob Olupona (Cambridge: Roots and Branches, 1996), 111-112.

¹³ Okot p'Bitek, *African Religions in Western Scholarship* (Nairobi: East African Publishing Bureau, 1971), 105.

¹⁴ Platvoet attributes the following abstracting tendencies to the grounding in European philosophy that liberal missionaries had leading to "articulation, systematisation and generalisation of beliefs and

multiplicity and regional differences during what Adogame calls “the cultural-nationalist period of the 1950s and 1960s”.¹⁵ For example, Kagame¹⁶ and Temples,¹⁷ among others, are Vincent Mulago’s sources for his “Essential elements in Black African Religion,” itself a broader extrapolation from “Bantu religions”. The same theological typologies, e.g. ‘Supreme Being,’ structure his analysis. However, Vatican II apparently informs his theological framework.¹⁸

Subsequent research suggests that “African indigenous religions are as heterogenous as were and are the African societies themselves”.¹⁹ This has generated debate regarding the extent to which, for example, the concept of ‘Supreme Being’ is or has always been common to all African Traditional Religions.²⁰

However, even in later research, heterogeneity does not preclude religio-cultural similarities. For example, Platvoet attributes the higher incidence of language similarities among the Bantu-speaking parts of Africa (compared to languages in the West and Sudanic Africa) to a shallow ‘glottochronological depth’ (‘some common past in relation to current diversities’) of less than 2000 years.²¹ We find, therefore, similarities and echoes of a common past among the Bantu even in research that is explicit about differences in African societies.

other cultural concepts” and to extrapolations from the particular to the universal. Platvoet, “From Object to Subject,” 113.

¹⁵ Ludwig and Adogame, 14-15, 18. Cf. Platvoet, “From Object to Subject,” 114. Parrinder “used the fact that ‘no histories of these religions could be produced because they had not produced texts’ as justification for his synchronistic, comparative approach to African traditional religion.” Platvoet, “From Object to Subject,” 115.

¹⁶ E.g. A. Kagame, *La Philosophie Bantu Comparée* (Paris: 1976).

¹⁷ E.g. P. Temples, *La Philosophie Bantoue* (Paris: 1961).

¹⁸ Vincent Mulago, “Traditional African Religion and Christianity,” in *African Traditional Religions in Contemporary Society*, ed. Jacob B. Olupona (St. Paul, Minnesota: Paragon House, 1991), 119-132. Platvoet includes Bolaji Idowu (1962) and John Mbiti (1971) among these scholars. Jan G. Platvoet, “The Religions of Africa in Their Historical Order,” in *The Study of Religions in Africa: Past, Present and Prospects*, 62, note 78.

¹⁹ Platvoet, “Religions of Africa,” 52.

²⁰ Kiernan attributes its presence in Southern Bantu religions (save one) to “conceptual conquest” by Christian missionaries. Platvoet, “Religions of Africa,” 55, note 39.

²¹ Platvoet, “Religions of Africa,” 53-55.

The discourse below primarily relates to the cultures in the Hebrew bible. It also relates to 'Africans' as the once-colonized, essentially the Bantu populations of West, East, Central and southern Africa.²² For this reason, Mbiti is reluctant to discuss white South African biblical scholarship because it is 'still European' and 'closed to the realities of African presence'.²³

Partly because of the nature of the material,²⁴ and partly because of difficulties in relating aspects of the Old Testament to history as reconstructed using the archaeological evidence of Palestine,²⁵ establishing the historical context of several Old Testament narratives continues to be problematic.²⁶ However, a sufficient number of valid parallels between patriarchal customs and those of the ancient Near East exist suggesting that the material accurately reflects the social and historical setting in which the Bible places it.²⁷

The select elements covered in this chapter constitute the presumed epistemological continuities that we use in the analysis of both the Zambian and biblical data. In the ensuing sections, we discuss cultural phenomena simultaneously in the two socio-cultural entities organised under three major headings: coherence and spirituality of creation, coherence and hierarchy of society, and concreteness.

²² Cf. LeMarquand, 77.

²³ J. S. Mbiti, *Bible and Theology in African Christianity* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1986), 17-18.

²⁴ In spite of its historiographical nature, the material is family history with a theological message that has come through a complex process of oral and written tradition. W. S. Lasor, D. A. Hubbard, and F. Wm. Bush, *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament*, 2 ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing House, 1996), 40.

²⁵ John Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975), 112.

²⁶ Therefore, some dismiss their historicity altogether. E.g. N. P. Lemche, *The Israelites in History and Tradition*, Library of Ancient Israel (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 166.

²⁷ A. R. Millard and D. J. Wiseman, eds., *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives*, 2 ed. (Leicester: 1983), 125-129. Cf. Seters, 65-103. Cf. J. N. Tubb, *Peoples of the Past: Canaanites* (London: British Museum Press, 1998), 20. Cf. D. Pardee, "Background to the Bible: Ugarit," in *Ebla to Damascus: Art and Archaeology of Ancient Syria*, ed. H. Weiss (Washington, D.C.: 1985), 253-260.

1. Coherence and Spirituality of Creation

Against the Western distinction between the physical and the metaphysical, Dickson notes the absence of such a dichotomy in African languages known to him.²⁸ African traditions are consistent in classifying humanity as created by God. Humanity's essential relation to God is worship and adoration.²⁹

African thought makes no formal distinctions between the sacred and the secular or the spiritual and the material.³⁰ A consequence is that Africans often associate spiritual powers with natural objects and phenomena. Much like the Canaanite cult of the Baals,³¹ the sun, moon, and the stars feature in myths and beliefs of many peoples.³² For Dickson, this accounts for associations of African religious beliefs with animism and fetishism.³³ They live in a spiritual environment and spiritual powers are both active and the ultimate causes of events and circumstances.³⁴ The pervasiveness of this holistic perspective has led some to conclude that Africans identify themselves with nature with theological connotations.³⁵

²⁸ Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, 160-161. Cf. J. Jahn, *Muntu: An Outline of Neo-African Culture*, trans. M. Greene, Illustrated ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), 173, and the Akan Nyame n'amodze, lit. 'God's created things'. Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, 161.

²⁹ S. Sidhom, "The Theological Estimate of Man," in *Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs*, ed. K. A. Dickson and P. Ellingworth (London: Lutterworth Press, 1969), 100.

³⁰ J. S. Mbiti, *The Prayers of African Religion* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1975), 2. For the persistence of this worldview in contemporary Africa, see Ogbu U. Kalu, "'Globalisation' and Religion: The Pentecostal Model in Contemporary Africa," in *Uniquely African? African Christian Identity from Cultural and Historical Perspectives*, ed. James L. Cox and Gerrie Ter Haar, Religion in Contemporary Africa Series (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc, 2003), 228-230.

³¹ Baal is a common Semitic noun meaning 'lord, owner'. Applied to a god it occurs about 90 times in the OT. Baal worship pervaded the entire area inhabited by the Canaanites. Each of the 'separate population groups within the Syrian-Palestine area' knew their own Baal. Karen van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, eds., *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, 2 ed. (Leiden and Grand Rapids: Brill and Eerdmans, 1999), 132, 133.

³² J. S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1969), 51-53.

³³ Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, 48-49.

³⁴ Ibid. Cf. M. Mead, *Growing up in New Guinea* (New York: Mentor Books, 1953), 67.

³⁵ D. M. Gitari and G. P. Benson, eds., *Witnessing to the Living God in Contemporary Africa* (Nairobi, Kenya: Africa Theological Fraternity, 1986), vii; J. Macquarrie, "The Idea of a Theology of Nature," *USQR* 30 (1975): 69-75; and J. Jordan, *Bishop Shanahan of Southern Nigeria* (Dublin: Clonmore and Reynold Ltd., 1948), 124.

A holistic understanding of the physical and the metaphysical is self-evident in the polemics of the messengers of Yahweh against the religious practices of Israel's neighbours.³⁶ In Ancient Israel, natural objects and places associated with divine activity and presence were sacred.³⁷ Such association is evident in Israel's neighbours.³⁸ The association is pervasive in the Old Testament, including in the prohibitions against idolatry given to Israel on Mount Carmel.³⁹ It is clear, in such associations, that the ultimate objects of veneration are the spirit beings associated with the places and objects. In this regard, Dickson argues that Israel's settlement in Palestine raised the issue of Baal versus Yahweh although Yahweh was always something more than a nature deity.⁴⁰

Worldview similarities between Israel and her neighbours have led to the recognition that there are numerous traits in the religion of Israel that prove that it developed from beliefs originally common to all Semites and that in some important particulars the *developed* religion of Israel shows affinity with the religious thought and practice of other oriental peoples.⁴¹ Goldingay, for instance, makes a distinction between what Israelites actually believed in Old Testament times and the teachings of the Old Testament. The former apparently included worship of Yahweh with syncretistic elements with surroundings religious beliefs.⁴² This has led some to argue for a

³⁶ E.g. 2 Chr 28:22-25; 1 Kgs 11:5.

³⁷ E.g. the oak of Moreh (Gen 12:6. Cf. Josh 24:26); well at Beersheba (Gen 21:25-34. Cf. Gen 26:18, 23-25); and Mt. Carmel, 'the mountain of God' (Exod 19, 20:8; 1 Kgs 19:8-18).

³⁸ E.g. Mt. Gerizim (John 4:19-20). Cf. Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary. New Testament* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 273.

³⁹ Job 12:7-10, 15; 35:10; Ps 8; 19:1-6; Acts 14:17; Neh 9:6; and Exod 20:4-6.

⁴⁰ Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, 163-164. Cf. Amos 5: 25-27; Acts 7:42-3 with Ps 8; 19. However, he concludes that Canaanite beliefs are closer to the African understanding of the nature of the land than the Israelites. Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, 166.

⁴¹ W. O. E. Oesterley, "Israel and Its Religious Environment," in *Old Testament Essays: Papers Read before the Society for Old Testament Study at Its Eighteenth Meeting Held at Keble College, Oxford, September 27th to 30th, 1927* (London: Charles Griffin and Co. Ltd, 1927), 156.

⁴² John Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 1 (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 15-16.

‘Canaanite culture,’ a shared cosmology for the West Semitic world, “despite the sporadic objections of purists,” to which biblical experience and thought belong.⁴³

The coherence and spirituality of the created order sheds light on the place of ritual in African societies. Among the Ndembu, symbols are landmarks that connect the unknown with the known and reveal conceptual ideas.⁴⁴ For example, the *Musoli* tree, whose fruit and shoots are appreciated by duiker and other woodland animals, ‘reveals’ game. Hence, portions of it are used as medicines (*Yatumbu*) in rituals performed to rid hunters of misfortune.⁴⁵ This phenomenon has generated an entire figurative genre. For instance, a taproot of the *Musoli* tree is employed in a ritual to reveal hidden animosities and derivatives of the etymological stem, *isoli*, or *chisoli*, are nouns that designate “a place of revelation”, and refer to specially consecrated sites used only in the final phases of important rituals. For these reasons, Ayo Bamgbose has noted that claims of the grammatical and syntactical paucity of African languages really reflect the linguistic incompetence of the first collectors of language material.⁴⁶

Association of visual phenomena with etymologies in the meanings of Hebrew words is not uncommon.⁴⁷ For example, אָנָּה is associated with the redness of the nose, presumably when a person is angry. Derivatives of this stem include the verb אָנָּה, “to be angry”; the noun אָנָּה, “nostril”, or “nose”, or “face”, or “anger.”⁴⁸ פָּנָה, “turn,” generates the noun פָּנָה, plural פָּנִים which means “face” from the concept “as I turned toward one.”⁴⁹ The plural form of the noun is preferred even when the singular is intended in order to capture the plurality of features seen when one turns towards

⁴³ N. Wyatt, *Myths of Power: A Study of Royal Myth and Ideology in Ugaritic and Biblical Tradition*, Ugaritisch-Biblische Literatur (UBL) Band 13 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1996), 19-22.

⁴⁴ V. W. Turner, “Ritual Symbolism, Morality and Social Structure among the Ndembu,” in *African Systems of Thought*, ed. M. Fortes and G. Dieterlen (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 80.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 80, 81.

⁴⁶ A. Bamgbose, “On Devising, Reforming and Harmonising Orthographies in African Languages,” in *African Languages: Proceedings of the Meeting of Experts on the Transcription and Harmonization of African Languages, Niamey (Niger), 17-21 July 1978* (Paris: UNESCO, 1981), 46.

⁴⁷ Cf. Philip Nel, “The Study of Hebrew and the Old Testament in Africa,” *BOTSA* 18 (2005): 9-10.

⁴⁸ BDB, 60.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 815.

someone.⁵⁰ The editors of BDB were aware of the objections to treating Hebrew words as derivatives of stems (consonantal roots) but insisted that this method of grouping was “an obvious demand from the scientific [empirical] point of view” and actually found the objections unconvincing.⁵¹

In the context of prophetic symbolism, Robinson notes that to say, “Jews seek for signs” is to make them true to their Semitic origin.⁵² He ascribes the Semitic penchant for symbolism to his ‘concrete and individualising imagination’ and naïve realism that is evident in many ‘ancient or primitive usages’ and in the symbolic acts of Hebrew prophets.⁵³ Examples include Moses bringing on the Egyptian plague of boils by throwing up handfuls of furnace soot⁵⁴ and Muhammad flinging a handful of pebbles against an enemy three times his own men in number as a representation of the promised angelic helpers.⁵⁵ The fortunes of Israel’s battle against Amalek correspond with Moses’ lifting or lowering of the staff⁵⁶ and the wives of the Tshi-speaking warriors of Africa keep up a mimic battle to help their husbands at war. This realism recognizes that an act performed in one place may be causally reproduced in another.⁵⁷ According to Stacey, there are more than forty examples of such behaviour in the Old Testament.⁵⁸

The above suggests that Semitic people see a connection between ultimate reality and its representation. Interestingly, as early as 1927, Robinson raised an epistemological point of difference by conceding that naïve realism is difficult to grasp for people like him who have a different outlook on life and religion because it involves conceptions that are remote from his own.⁵⁹ To this realism, he also

⁵⁰ For examples, see Gen 4: 5, 6, and 16.

⁵¹ BDB, viii, x.

⁵² H. W. Robinson, “Prophetic Symbolism,” in *Old Testament Essays*, 1. Cf. 1 Cor 1:22.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Exod 9:8-12.

⁵⁵ Qu’ran viii.9, 17.

⁵⁶ Exod 17:8-13.

⁵⁷ Robinson, 2. Cf. Jer 51:63-64.

⁵⁸ W. D. Stacey, *Prophetic Drama in the Old Testament* (London: Epworth Press, 1990), 3.

⁵⁹ Robinson, 10-11.

ascribes the meanings that Hebrew proper names often carry and frequent use of paronomasia.⁶⁰ He also acknowledges it in the working of “the primitive mind in general.”⁶¹

Largely due to the poor quality of anthropological data on which it rests, Robinson’s scholarship, as also that of his contemporaries,⁶² has been challenged and discredited. Rooted in the social-evolutionary model,⁶³ and prior to the advent of fieldwork research in anthropological studies,⁶⁴ it operated on the assumption that the process of social evolution was similar for all societies. Therefore, ‘primitive societies’ were resources for filling in the gaps in the sociological and epistemological states of ancient biblical societies.⁶⁵ In nineteenth-century critical study of the Old Testament, this led to a developmental and evolutionary view of Hebrew religion.⁶⁶

For example, Rogerson challenged Robinson’s thesis of a Hebrew mentality underlying the epistemology in the Old Testament fundamentally, because he found the explanations and justifications for such mentalities inadequate and unconvincing.⁶⁷ However, he unfortunately, equated faulty rationale for prior epistemological frameworks with their non-existence.

⁶⁰ A play on words with the same or similar sounds but different meanings. Lasor, Hubbard, and Bush, 317.

⁶¹ Robinson, 14. Cf. Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, E. B. Idowu, *God in Nigerian Belief* (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1963), 9; “God,” in *Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs*, 18-19, 21; and A. C. Thiselton, *Interpreting God and the Postmodern Self: On Meaning, Manipulation and Promise* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing House, 1995), 103.

⁶² E.g. J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, Abridged ed. (New York and London: Macmillan, 1923), Lévy-Bruhl’s 1922 publication, L. Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitive Mentality*, trans. L. A. Clare, Beacon Press Paperbacks (Boston: 1966), and J. Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture*, II vols., vol. I (Copenhagen and London: Branner Og Korch and Oxford University Press, 1926).

⁶³ I.e. Human societies progress from the magic stage to the religion stage and then the science stage. J. W. Rogerson, *Anthropology and the Old Testament* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 47, 49. Cf. Rex Mason, “H. Wheeler Robinson Revisited,” *BQ* 37, no. 5 (1998): 219-220, 224.

⁶⁴ It is not until towards mid-twentieth century that fieldwork involving the knowledge of local language and living among the people (participant observation) and functionalism (description of the contributions of individuals within society) became part of methodology for the study of so-called primitive societies. Rogerson, 16.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 2, 4, 5-8, 10-13, 17-18. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Social Anthropology* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951), 24, 27.

⁶⁶ Mason: 219.

⁶⁷ Rogerson, 57, 59.

Such criticism has not silenced attempts at defining the nature of symbolic associations, the relation of the individual to the group and other features of so-called primitive societies *in terms of epistemological presuppositions*.⁶⁸ In fact, the advent of fieldwork research methodology in anthropology has tended more to challenge the perceptions of primitivism associated with the so-called primitive people than to discredit the thesis of distinct mental states underlying societies and cultures.⁶⁹ Calls for including epistemological frameworks in considerations of method and the impossibility of freeing ourselves from pre-understanding are getting louder in western biblical scholarship.⁷⁰

In structural anthropology, there is already movement from the necessary⁷¹ limits on what can be said about a society towards seeking cross-cultural comparison.⁷² For our purposes, the enduring value of Robinson's work lies in its instinct that comparative anthropology is important in making ancient texts accessible to the modern reader.⁷³

2. Coherence and Hierarchy of Society

Coherence or holism is at the centre of the African understanding of society.

Community, as the communion of individuals, is the fabric of African politics, social structures and ethics and its soundness is of paramount importance:

⁶⁸ Cf. Cyril Rodd's comments in his introduction to a re-print of 'Corporate Personality' in 1981 that "it is by no means certain that 'corporate personality' will be dropped as easily as Rogerson hopes". Mason: 223.

⁶⁹ Rogerson, 16. Cf. Nur Yalman, "Article on 'Magic'," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. David L. Sills (New York and London: Macmillan and Collier-MacMillan, 1968).

⁷⁰ E.g. Iain W. Provan, "In the Stable with the Dwarves: Testimony, Interpretation, Faith and the History of Israel," in *Windows into Old Testament History*, ed. V. Philips Long, David W. Baker, and Gordon J. Wenham (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 161-197; Stacey, 8, 11.

⁷¹ Limitation was necessary because of the blatant inaccuracies that constituted the anthropological data of the periods before fieldwork.

⁷² Rogerson, 19-20.

⁷³ Mason: 220.

A society is in equilibrium when its customs are maintained, its goals attained and the spirit powers given regular and adequate recognition. Members of society are expected to live and act in such a way as to promote society's well-being; to do otherwise is to court disaster, not only for the actor but also for society as a whole. Any act that detracts from the soundness of a society is looked upon with disfavour and society takes remedial measures to reverse the evil consequences set in motion.⁷⁴

For Sidhom, human identity is rooted in the tribe. Outsiders are strangers, inferiors and even enemies.⁷⁵

African traditions place the origins of man in the creative action of God. This is the ultimate origin even where the action of creation is seen as delegated by God to some lesser divinity.⁷⁶

The coherence of the tribe is itself part of a larger entity that practically includes the whole universe: "nature, God, ancestors, the tribe, the clan, the extended family, and the self." The basic principles of indwelling and interaction underlie all human relationships.⁷⁷ Interaction means relationships are meant to preserve the universe.⁷⁸ This explains why misfortune invariably extends to spiritual causes.⁷⁹

Religion in African traditional life is an ontological phenomenon. It includes the past, the present and the future. It forms a part of everything and approximates consciousness itself. Life for the African is a religious drama in a religious universe. Inability to come to terms with this starting point is responsible for misunderstandings of both the religions and people of Africa. It is also responsible for "the tragedy of establishing since the missionary expansion of the nineteenth century only a very superficial type of Christianity on African soil".⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, 62.

⁷⁵ Sidhom, 99.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 100.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 102. Here, "Indwelling" alludes to the consciousness of being a unit among many units and "interaction" refers to the coherence and inter-relatedness of everything and everyone.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 103.

⁷⁹ J. C. Mitchell, "The Meaning in Misfortune for Urban Africans," in *African Systems of Thought: Studies Presented and Discussed at the Third International African Seminar in Salisbury, December 1960* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 194. Cf. P. Temples, *Bantu Philosophy* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1959), 66.

⁸⁰ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 15.

For example, physical death means passing from one state of this cohesive whole into another although the exact relationship between the two is a highly debated topic. This is what popular missionary thought, until very recently, understood as ‘ancestor worship’.⁸¹

The Biblical material evidences this understanding of coherence. To Eliphaz, the innocent do not suffer.⁸² Meanwhile, Job understands God to be intricately involved in his tragedies.⁸³ The destination of the deceased is *Sheol*, the nondescript abode of the dead.⁸⁴ The apparent absence of incredulity on the part of Peter, James and John upon seeing the long deceased Moses and Elijah suggests that continuity between the living and the dead was not foreign to their worldview.⁸⁵ Controversy surrounding the resurrection within the Sanhedrin was with respect to its nature, not its reality.⁸⁶

Coherence makes spiritual activities an integral component of human activities in the biblical material. For example, artistry is a spiritual endowment.⁸⁷ Prophetic leadership is a consequence of the presence and help of the Spirit.⁸⁸ Dreams are channels of divine communication.⁸⁹ The Holy Spirit is the believer’s παράκλητος,

⁸¹ E.g. M. Fortes, “Some Reflections on Ancestor Worship in Africa,” in *African Systems of Thought*, 122-141.

⁸² Job 4:7-9.

⁸³ Job 7:11-21; 9:1-12.

⁸⁴ Literally “underworld” or by derivation from the root לָקַח, “place of inquiry” (reference to necromancy). BDB, 982. This suggests some measure of accessibility by the living. Compare 1 Sam 28:6 (“when Saul enquired – לָקַח – of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by prophets” [NASB]) with 1 Sam 28:11-14, 19, where he is consulting a deceased Samuel through a medium.

⁸⁵ Matt 17:1-17.

⁸⁶ The Pharisees believed in a bodily resurrection but the Sadducees did not. The Sadducees adhered only to Genesis through Deuteronomy, which contain no explicit teaching on the resurrection. *Life Application Bible: New Living Translation*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1996), 1751, notes for 23:6-8.

⁸⁷ Exod 28:3; 31:3.

⁸⁸ Num 11:17, 29; Isa 11:2-4; 42:1-4.

⁸⁹ Matt 1:20-25; Acts 2:17-18; 10:10-16; Gen 40:5-23 (esp. v. 8); 41:1-40 (esp. vv. 16, 25, 38); Dan 2:3, 11, 17-18, 19-23.

helper.⁹⁰ Therefore, the African worldview epistemologically endears the spiritual realities and activities in the biblical texts to Africans.⁹¹

The customs and practices that govern human relationships reflect the coherence above. Malicious and disruptive use of spiritual power is the centre of evil. This is the essence of magic, sorcery and witchcraft.⁹² In interpersonal relationships, social equilibrium is sustained by a concept of hierarchy based on age, status, laws, and customs. Behaviour, regulations, rules, observances and taboos constitute the moral code and ethics of a given community.⁹³

To break these is to err against the society because it endangers the entire community. The corporate community punishes breaching spiritual codes.⁹⁴ Breaches often implicate the offender's family or even the whole community in guilt and liability to punishment.⁹⁵ For example, the offence of one member adversely affects the whole village among the Lele of Kasai, Congo⁹⁶ and the sin of one symbolically binds together the whole family in its guilt among the Mende of Sierra Leone.⁹⁷

Punishments meted out by or to the community to prevent or stop divine judgement and that, depending on the nature of the offence, may extend to the offender's household or even clan, feature distinctively in the Bible. For example, the conspiracy of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram against God's servants, Moses and Aaron, resulted in the punitive entombment of their households, followers and belongings.⁹⁸ The immorality and idolatry of some Israelite men with foreign women led to the

⁹⁰ John 14:16-18; 15:26-27; 16:7-15.

⁹¹ Cf. S. N. Ezeanya, "God, Spirits and the Spirit World," in *Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs*, 45.

⁹² Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 205.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ezeanya, 112.

⁹⁶ D. Forde, *African Worlds: Studies in the Cosmological Ideas and Social Values of African Peoples* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), 13.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 133.

⁹⁸ Num 16:1-34.

death of 24,000 Israelites.⁹⁹ Achan's greed led to the defeat of the whole nation against the city of Ai and to the destruction of his entire family.¹⁰⁰

The basics of a tribe are common language,¹⁰¹ geographical locality and culture (including a common history of origins, customs, morals, ethics, social behaviour and material objects).¹⁰² Kinship reckoned through blood and betrothal (engagement and marriage) bonds a tribe together.¹⁰³ It is the basis for the vast elasticity of terms. Within kinship, keeping track of one's genealogical tree is of critical importance because it informs one's participation within that community.¹⁰⁴

Biblical texts evidence striking parallels in kinship. The Hebrew household was part of a remarkably sophisticated system for distributing power along kinship lines that extend beyond mere blood relationships to include economical, social, and financial ones.¹⁰⁵ Familial terms refer to a variety of people besides blood relatives and genealogical records communicate all kinds of messages.¹⁰⁶

In the New Testament, preserving social harmony within the hierarchy of relationships in the community seems to be the rationale behind some of Paul's teachings. Women should learn quietly in the assembly.¹⁰⁷ Rebuking older people *sharply* is forbidden.¹⁰⁸ The husband is the head of the house just as Christ is the

⁹⁹ Num 25:1-9.

¹⁰⁰ Josh 7:1-26 (esp. v 25). Cf. Josh 22:10-34.

¹⁰¹ However, in many cases, these languages are related to one another and can be classified into families or stocks.

¹⁰² Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 101-103.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 104.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 104-105.

¹⁰⁵ V. H. Matthews and D. C. Benjamin, *Social World of Ancient Israel 1250-587 BCE* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), 7-8.

¹⁰⁶ E.g. the omission of Cain and Abel in 1 Chr 1:1. Cf. Gen 4:1-2, 25; or the omission of the brothers to Hezron, Ram and David (and sisters), in Ruth 4:18-22. Cf. 1Chr 2:5-16.

¹⁰⁷ 1 Tim 2:11-14; 4:12.

¹⁰⁸ 1 Tim 5:1-2.

head of the church.¹⁰⁹ Children must *obey* their parents and parents must not *provoke* their children. Slaves must *obey* their masters.¹¹⁰

The above suggests that social stratification controls acceptable behaviour within ethical imperatives. Therefore, young Timothy may rebuke older women but only with respect. Children are expected to obey parents but abuse of parental authority is not sanctioned. Admittedly, the texts above have been interpreted differently and it is not our intention here to debate the merits or de-merits of these interpretations. We merely want to show that interpreting texts from social and epistemological frameworks influences the meanings that we arrive at.

3. Concreteness

Concreteness is perhaps the most pervasive continuity between African and OT epistemologies. Africans, like their OT counterparts, subsume abstraction in concreteness.

Predisposition to think holistically and to subsume abstract rationality in some phenomenon is the essence of African concreteness. Those lacking discernment have erroneously understood this holism and concreteness to exclude both individualism¹¹¹ and abstractness respectively.¹¹² In this overview, we limit ourselves to considerations of concreteness in relation to time and language because time is a widely researched topic in both cultures and language is integral to hermeneutical theory.

¹⁰⁹ Eph 5:1-2.

¹¹⁰ Eph 6:1-6.

¹¹¹ This represents the consciousness of the individual elements that make up the whole. In terms of people, the accusation is that Africans have no sense of self-identity because their identity is in the group.

¹¹² The accusation here would be that Africans do not understand or think in abstract terms.



3.1. Concreteness in Time

To the African, time exists in relation to event. The event in question could be in the past, the present, or the future.¹¹³ This means that it is *what* happens as opposed to *when* it happens that provides an entry point into discussions of time.

This has led Mbiti to argue that Africans lack a concept of the future, being incapable of communicating the distant future beyond two years because future events have not yet taken place. Therefore, actual time is what is present and what is past.¹¹⁴

Further, there is no concept in African thought of history moving forward, towards a future climax, or the end of the world and Africans have no belief in progress, the idea that the development of human activities and achievements move from a low to a higher degree. Therefore, outside the reckoning of a year, African concept is silent and indifferent and endlessness or eternity only lies in the region of the past.¹¹⁵

However, as I noted elsewhere, his basic observation that time is linked to event is correct but his conclusion that Africans have no concept of the future is suspect.¹¹⁶

This objection is borne out by the barrage of criticism that his argument that Africans lack a conception of the future has generated. J. Parrat, for instance, has pointed out that time as promise of events whose origins are in the past and the present “is a definite feature of African thought.”¹¹⁷

Mbiti’s point is well made, however, that where no event is in focus there is no concept of time in this epistemological entity. It is for this reason that it characteristically projects the future as anticipated event or as a re-occurrence of present or past event even if this re-occurrence involves new elements.

¹¹³ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 17.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 17, 22.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 21, 23. Cf. J. S. Mbiti, *New Testament Eschatology in an African Background: A Study of the Encounter between New Testament Theology and African Traditional Concepts* (London: London University Press, 1971), 24.

¹¹⁶ M. Nyirenda, “The Exegetical Value of an African Reading of Genesis 4” (MCS Thesis, Regent College, 2000), 99.

¹¹⁷ J. Parrat, “Time in Traditional African Thought,” *Religion* 7, no. 2 (1977): 118. Cf. R. Gehman, *Doing African Christian Theology: An Evangelical Perspective* (Nairobi, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House, 1987), 64ff.

This association is evident in “*phenomenon calendars*”, events or phenomena that constitute and mark time. Examples include the lunar months of pregnancy as time markers for expectant women, the days of travel between places as markers of distance and the events of a day, week, month, or year as their markers. They also include the activities associated with times of the day as their markers (e.g. sunrise, time for milking the cows, bringing them home from the fields, etc.).¹¹⁸

Characteristically, phenomenon markers of time do not necessarily correspond to mathematical moments. For instance, sunrise is linked to the actual sunrise as opposed to a specific time.¹¹⁹

Association of time with phenomena in the OT epistemological constitution is demonstrable at every point that it has been shown to exist in African thought.

Phenomenon calendars are matched with uncanny similarity:

The night was divided into three watches according to Mesopotamian usage . . . Months are 29 or 30 depending on the phases of the moon. Their names, borrowed from the Canaanites, relate to agricultural life: the months of grain, flowers, streams, rain, sowing, etc . . . the dates are established in relation to outstanding events or to the judges and kings.¹²⁰

The day is divided without precision according to natural phenomena: “the morning and the evening . . . mid-day . . . the setting sun . . . the breeze which blows before sunrise, etc.”¹²¹

In the Bible, where the eschaton is a subject of prophetic messages and therefore, revelation, the concept of “future” is also presented as a re-casting of past or present events or personages.¹²² For instance, the promise of restoration given on the eve of Israel’s entry into the Promised Land¹²³ is the basis of Jeremiah’s prophecy in the

¹¹⁸ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 19-22. Cf. L. F. Nalder, ed., *A Tribal Survey of Mongalla Province* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), 11.

¹¹⁹ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 19.

¹²⁰ A. Chouraqui, *The People and the Faith of the Bible*, trans. W. V. Gugli (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1975), 116.

¹²¹ R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, vol. I (New York and Toronto: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1965), 180, 182.

¹²² This is a possible explanation for the recurrence of the so-called thematically significant motifs like “restoration from captivity” and archetypal personages like Elijah, David and Moses.

¹²³ Deut 30:3 in the shadow of Deut 29:25 represents this basic promise.

shadow of the Babylonian exile.¹²⁴ However, this promise adumbrates a future and more comprehensive restoration, one extending to all humanity in Christ Jesus.¹²⁵

In incorporating the element of a Davidic dynasty beyond the Babylonian exile, Jesus Christ's coming as a descendant of David¹²⁶ and the "restoration" of those from the entire human race who believe and obey his Gospel¹²⁷ become the "new" message. Likewise, John the Baptist's ministry is portrayed as a re-occurrence of that of the prophet Elijah.¹²⁸ Christ comes as the prophet Moses¹²⁹ and as the second Adam.¹³⁰ Likewise, Reimer notes how 'exile' and 'exodus' have become 'metaphors' for appropriation in various contexts in the Bible and in Christian thought.¹³¹

In prophetic symbolism, prophetic enactments are miniature concretisations of foretold events.¹³² For instance, the prophet Agabus bound himself with Paul's belt to forecast Paul's imprisonment in Jerusalem.¹³³

The discussion above illustrates that both time as event and the future as projected reincarnation of event are as much features of the OT epistemological constitution as they are of the African. In the section below, we will discuss concreteness in communication and language.

¹²⁴ Jer 29:28; 30.

¹²⁵ Jer 33:14-26.

¹²⁶ Matt 1:1-16; Luke 3:23-38.

¹²⁷ John 14:6; Acts 17:26-31. Cf. Isa 11:1-11; 53:1-12; Acts 8:26-34.

¹²⁸ Cf. 1 Kgs 17:1-7 with Mal 4:5 and Matt 17:10-13.

¹²⁹ Cf. Deut 18:15 with Acts 3:22 and 7:37.

¹³⁰ 1Cor 15:45-48.

¹³¹ D. J. Reimer, "Exile," in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, ed. Adrian Hastings, Alistair Mason, and Hugh Piper (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 226-227.

¹³² For examples, compare Acts 21:10-12 with Acts 21:27-40.

¹³³ Acts 21:10, 27-40.

3.2. Concreteness in Communication and Language

The goal of communication is mediation of meaning from one person to another. Therefore, communication has succeeded when the meaning received corresponds with the meaning transmitted. The mediums and dynamics of communication are specific to given societies and this is what makes any discussion of communication and language, of which hermeneutics is a derivative discipline, a discussion of epistemology.¹³⁴

Language, with its twin entities of semiotics and semantics conveys meaning in keeping with associations that exist among their users.¹³⁵ As such, it is subject to the dynamism with which *societies move creatively and communally* between symbol and significance in an ongoing process. This is what makes the notion of generic (or intrinsic) meanings problematic and requires qualification of etymological meanings.¹³⁶ However, etymologies do shed valuable insights on word meanings even if it is merely as the story of the origins and evolution of these meanings.

3.2.a. Communication

Pedersen is grappling with Semitic epistemological coherence when he observes that “the Hebrew view reality with the purpose of discovering totality.” For example, he cites נפש (soul) as man in his total essence, לב (heart) as the self when it functions as operative power and זכר (remember) as a calling forth of an image in the soul and making that image to assist in determining direction, action.¹³⁷ Coherence in communication means that conceptualization is from the generic to the particular.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ R. Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture & Theology: A Pentecostal Perspective* (Baguio City, Philippines: Asia Pacific Theological Seminary Press, 1995), 25. Cf. Waltke and O'Connor, 45.

¹³⁵ Waltke and O'Connor, 45.

¹³⁶ Nida, *Signs, Sense, Translation*, 42.

¹³⁷ Pedersen, 99, 106-107. Cf. Brevard S. Childs, *Memory and Tradition in Israel* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1962), 17.

¹³⁸ In Schleiermacher's system of hermeneutics, this means that the grasping of the unity of the whole precedes the grasping of the peculiarities of its parts. F. D. E. Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics: The Hand-Written Manuscripts* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977), 168.

Awareness of the total environment or context in which the communication is happening is prerequisite to specific communication and informs the adoption of appropriate vehicles and demeanour. This element encroaches on the discussion on hierarchy in society above. For example, one's position in the society informs the nature of their communication.

If we apply this principle to the biblical material, the order of speeches at the Jerusalem council makes James the presiding elder whose contribution concludes the proceedings.¹³⁹ Elihu, though greatly exercised by the comments of Job and his three friends, waits until the older ones have stopped speaking before contributing.¹⁴⁰ We noted above how Paul's commands with respect to the conduct of women in the assembly and human relationships in society could be understood in terms of social hierarchy as opposed to the intrinsic worth of the categories of people involved.

Sidhom notes that in North Africa, a person's dignity is considered part of his immortal soul or life essence. This is what makes communication a complex exercise in social awareness and manoeuvring. It involves subtle and indirect probing and 'hearing' the cues in the responses.¹⁴¹

3.2.b. Language

African languages display movement of meaning from the generic to the particular. Etymologically, we noted how uses of the *Musoli* tree in the context of hunting generated vocables with the generic meaning of "revelation." In similar fashion, consonantal roots in Hebrew etymologies embody some generic meanings.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Acts 15:13-30.

¹⁴⁰ Job 32:1-4.

¹⁴¹ Sidhom, 110.

¹⁴² "The chief bearers of meaning in Hebrew as in other Semitic languages are the consonants; the vowels serve merely to specify more particularly the meaning conveyed by the consonants" M. Greenberg, *Introduction to Hebrew* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), 17.

These roots assume specific meanings when found with affixes (prefixes or suffixes) or with infixes (changes within the root) or combinations of both¹⁴³ and in use.

Basing the meanings of Hebrew words on their etymologies has been criticised because use must have priority over lexical stock in determining their meanings.¹⁴⁴

However, this sort of criticism need not preclude the fact that social conventions as epistemology hold priority over and govern both semiotics and semantics.

Language is socio-cultural and subject to the philosophies and dynamism of specific societies.¹⁴⁵ Further, evolution of meanings demonstrates the continuities and discontinuities between morphology and semantics, and subsequent syntactical formulations. This knowledge is useful to comprehension of meanings.¹⁴⁶

African and Semitic languages also overwhelmingly demonstrate a preference for imagery, the figurative, and the poetical.¹⁴⁷ Imagery lends itself to both concreteness and discreteness of expression in which teachings are mediated through life-like stories, narratives, and are sensitive to the dignity of the other person.

Robert Alter decries the distortions created by the zeal to uncover the meaning of the biblical text for the instruction of modern readership that usually entail trying to convert the “extraordinary concreteness” of biblical Hebrew into “more abstract terms that have the purported advantage of clarity but turn the pungency of the original into stale paraphrase.” This loses sight of how the text expertly and artistically *intimates* its meanings.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³ Waltke and O'Connor, 83. Cf. C. L. Seow, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*, Revised ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 23.

¹⁴⁴ For examples, see James Barr, *Biblical Words of Time* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1962), 14, 97 and *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 46.

¹⁴⁵ Greenberg, 2-3.

¹⁴⁶ BDB, viii.

¹⁴⁷ For example, Wyatt contrasts the ‘modern, quasi-scientific kind, with rules of evidence and objectivity as its main aspiration’, with the ‘theocratic history’ ‘of the ancient world, with its uncritical amalgamation of history, legendary and mythological features’ which he attributes to both Israel and her neighbours. N. Wyatt, *The Mythic Mind: Essays on Cosmology and Religion in Ugaritic and Old Testament Literature* (London and Oakville: Equinox, 2005), 154.

¹⁴⁸ R. Alter, *Genesis: Translation and Commentary* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996), xii. Cf. Shimon Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, ed. David J. A. Clines and Philip R. Davies, trans. Dorothea Shefer-Vanson and Shimon Bar-Efrat, Second ed., JSOT Series 70 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 9-11.

Figures of speech preserve the dignity of the other by avoiding explicit and confrontational communication. Several categories of semantic and syntactical constructions generally classified under the term “figurative”, e.g. metaphor, simile, synecdoche, parable, allegory, type, euphemism, etc., derive their rationale from this cultural sensitivity. The prevalence of these genres is matched in Semitic literature.¹⁴⁹ Africans¹⁵⁰ have rich proverbial traditions.¹⁵¹ Their languages form their vocables from the root of the verb.¹⁵² They are complete systems of expression and are no less abstract than European languages although they have different means of abstracting that are attributable to differences in worldviews.¹⁵³

According to their criteria for abstracting and conceptualising, and according to their morphology, they have a grammar and their thought is qualitatively fully the equal of any other people alive today with respect to its subtlety, intricacy, precision and range.¹⁵⁴ In word-formation, idiom and grammatical structure, they appear to be more closely allied to the Semitic than to the Indo-European languages.¹⁵⁵

¹⁴⁹ K. A. Kitchen, *The Bible in Its World: The Bible and Archaeology Today* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1977), 95.

¹⁵⁰ “Africans” here refers to the language traditions spoken south of the Sahara since “North of this line most of the languages belong to a family considered ‘classic’ in the sense that some of the languages belonging to it have been written for centuries and are Afro-Asiatic rather than African.” P. Alexandre, *An Introduction to the Languages and Language in Africa*, trans. F. A. Leary (London: Heinemann, 1967), 32.

¹⁵¹ Cf. F. W. Golka, *The Leopard’s Spots: Biblical and African Wisdom in Proverbs* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993), and M. J. Masenya, “Proverbs 31:10-31 in a South African Context: A Bosadi (Womanhood) Perspective” (Doctoral Dissertation, University of South Africa, 1996).

¹⁵² E.g. page 43.

¹⁵³ Alexandre, 32-34.

¹⁵⁴ R. G. Armstrong, “Vernacular Languages and Cultures in Modern Africa,” in *Language in Africa: Papers of the Leverhulme Conference on Universities and the Language Problems of Tropical Africa Held at University College, Ibadan*, ed. J. Spencer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 68.

¹⁵⁵ Goldie, 302.

Chapter 3: Research Field, Parameters and Methodologies

In this chapter, we identify and justify the field of research in Zambia and the texts for analysis in the Bible, prescribe the parameters of research and establish the methodologies employed. Because of differences in research material and methods, the chapter is in two parts. Section A is a discussion of the research undertaken in Zambia and section B is a discussion of the research in the Bible.

A. Research Undertaken in the Eastern Province of Zambia: Research Field, Methodology and Parameters

In order to define this research and outline the ensuing investigation, we provide a brief history and the current state of the research field with a view to situate the respondents in their socio-cultural and political context. Thereafter, we outline the nature, aims, limitations and methodology of the research.

A.1. Research Field

In identifying the research field, we focus on two aspects of the area's history: the histories of the ethnic populations of Katete, Chipata and Petauke districts in the Eastern Province of Zambia and the country's recent political and missionary history.

The first synopsis provides us with a window into the socio-cultural and worldview realities of the respondents. The second throws some light on foreign socio-cultural and worldview influences in the region from the nineteenth century to date.

A.1.a. Ethnic Groups of Katete, Chipata and Petauke Districts in Eastern Province of Zambia: Historical Overview of Tribal Migrations

Katete, Chipata and Petauke districts in the Eastern Province of Zambia, the geographical location for the bulk of the research, are home to three tribes: the Chewa, the Ngoni and the Nsenga.¹

Some estimates place the presence of man in Zambia since between one and two million years ago.² Archaeological research suggests that its current Bantu³ populations are the result of later migrations from the north⁴ dating roughly from about two thousand years ago during the ‘Stone Age’⁵ and after invading and displacing the Hottentot-Bushman type people already in the region.⁶

When Jan Van Riebeeck raised the flag of the Dutch East India Company on the shore of Table Bay (later Cape Town) in 1652, the Bantu were already in the region. Some estimates place their presence in the region before the end of the first millennium.”⁷

Some of the current Bantu populations of Eastern Zambia “trace their origin to the Luba and Lunda empires of the Upper Congo basin.”⁸ These include the chieftainship of the Maravi who probably migrated in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. According to tradition, they settled in modern day southern Malawi and

¹ See Appendices IX and X.

² Brian M. Fagan, ed., *A Short History of Zambia from the Earliest Times until A.D. 1900* (London, England: Oxford University Press, 1966), 1.

³ “The term ‘Bantu’ does not refer to race, but to a group of related languages. The Bantu speakers, a Negroid people, are made up of many ethnic stocks.” Gann, *Central Africa*, 24, 39. Cf. Appendix VIII.

⁴ The specific origins of the Bantu are still a subject of debate by historians. Ibid., 39.

⁵ Ibid; Fagan, ed., 7; Richard Vaughan, ed., *Zambia* (Harare, Zimbabwe: CBC, 2000), 2. Cf. J. Desmond Clark, *The Prehistory of Southern Africa* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1959).

⁶ H. H. Johnston, *British Central Africa: An Attempt to Give Some Account of a Portion of the Territories under British Influence North of the Zambezi* (London: Methuen & Co., 1897), 52-54.

⁷ Ross, *David Livingstone*, 27-28.

⁸ Fagan, ed., 103.

Mozambique. In the sixteenth century, some of these groups moved eastwards into modern Zambia where they became known as the Chewa.⁹

The origins of the Nsenga in Petauke district are rather obscure but they seem to derive from the Lala who are linked to the Luba in a common process of migration and settlement.”¹⁰ They are sometimes associated with the Chewa.¹¹

The presence of the Ngoni in Zambia is part of return Bantu migrations from modern day South Africa triggered by Shaka’s military despotism.¹² In about 1820, Zwangendaba, a minor Nguni clan and military leader, fearing defeat from the Zulu king Chaka (or Shaka), led his people northwards from Natal, South Africa. Along the way, the ‘Ngoni,’ as they were called, collected a heterogeneous following of Swazi, Thonga (or Tonga), Kalanga, and other people and crossed the Zambezi River on November 19th 1835.¹³

Upon Zwangendaba’s death, the Ngoni splintered into several groups and settled in various parts in east and central Africa. In 1860 one such group led by Mpezeni, crossed the Luangwa River into Nsenga country. During the next twenty years, he encroached on the northern Chewa kingdom of Mkanda and, by 1880, had overrun it and established his headquarters in present day Chipata.¹⁴

Ngoni policy of assimilating captives aided syncretism so that before long Ngoni culture was all but erased.¹⁵ Today the Ngoni speak the language of the Nsenga, “among whom they lived, raided and married during the 1860s and 1870s.”¹⁶

⁹ Ibid., 103-104.

¹⁰ “Their social institutions indicate an affiliation with Luban peoples such as the Lala and Bisa.” Ibid., 107, 118.

¹¹ For instance, Undi, the paramount chief of the Chewa, installed Chief Kalindawalo, a leading Nsenga chief, about 1780. Richard Hall, *Zambia* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1965), 15.

¹² A. J. Wills, *An Introduction to the History of Central Africa*, Second ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 58-59.

¹³ Fagan, ed., 118.

¹⁴ Andrew Roberts, *A History of Zambia* (London: Heinemann, 1976), 119.

¹⁵ Cf. Johnston, 486.

¹⁶ Roberts, 120.

The Bantu groups profiled above still form the core of the societies in the districts associated with them. However, as elsewhere in Zambia, other ethnic groups have increasingly become part of these societies through intermarriage and under the new political and economic identity of post-independence Zambia.

A.1.b. Overview of the Introduction of European Philosophy in Zambia's Political and Missionary History

In Central Africa, pioneer missions preceded both commercial interests and administrative authority and influenced the impact of both on the indigenous population.¹⁷ The broader context of such missions was the eighteenth century Enlightenment in Europe.¹⁸

The Enlightenment was a European phenomenon and fostered in Europeans a new spirit and outlook.¹⁹ At its core lay confidence in the powers and possibilities of human reason and an attitude of radical scepticism that posed an intense and aggressive challenge to religion.²⁰

The Enlightenment is responsible for the pre-eminence of rationality in Western epistemological method, a critical component of all aspects of inquiry in Modernity. It is responsible for absolutist tendencies in the Reformation and the dogmas of theological Scholasticism of seventeenth century Protestantism. It is also the cause of religious reform movements that challenged absolutist elements within the church.²¹

The Pietistic Movement and its evangelical revival were a reaction in Britain to pre-occupation with dogma at the expense of reformed lives.²² Its partial success within the church gave rise to missionary societies formed to become instruments for foreign missions. They operated alongside the institutional church and sent

¹⁷ Wills, 97.

¹⁸ Smalley, x.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Costas, 158.

²² Ibid.

missionaries to Africa, Asia and the Americas.²³ These and their activities constitute the Modern Missionary Movement, the story of Western missions to the rest of the world spanning roughly the period 1792-1992.²⁴

Modern Missions in Central Africa are often linked to David Livingstone's exploratory journeys. He represents the popular face of radical cultural and epistemological disruption of the peoples of Central Africa.²⁵

He came looking for an entry route to Central Africa for Christianity, civilisation and commerce.²⁶ His legacy lies in how he carefully mapped the heartland of Central Africa and documented several aspects of the region during his famed trans-Africa exploratory journey (1853-56).²⁷ His findings were vital for later missionary²⁸ and British imperial interests in the area and often mark the beginning of a new era in the heart of Africa particularly from the perspective of Victorian England.²⁹

Mostly, missionaries in the Modern Missionary Movement operated from positions of power. This gave them extraordinary opportunity to "impose godliness by word of command."³⁰ Most would not have considered deferring to the African's view of right and wrong where differences presented themselves. Theirs was a mission to Christianise and civilise Bantu minds belonging to a lower stage of evolution and among whom "lying, stealing, gluttony, polygamy, licentious debauchery and cannibalism" were thought to be deeply ingrained³¹ according to the dominant thinking of the times.³²

²³ Ibid., 159.

²⁴ Smalley, ix.

²⁵ 'Popular' because a European presence is attested in the area before his coming. Hall, 15.

²⁶ Ross, 79.

²⁷ Ibid., 82.

²⁸ Vaughan, ed., 4. Cf. Hall, 34; and Harry W. Langworthy, *Zambia before 1890; Aspects of Pre-Colonial History* (London: Longman, 1972), 105.

²⁹ However, see Ross, xi.

³⁰ Lewis. H. Gann, *A History of Northern Rhodesia: Early Days to 1953* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1964), 38.

³¹ Ibid., 38-39.

³² Embracing Christianity usually meant a complete break with family, "since missionaries insisted that a Christian life could only be followed within a Christian family or community." Roberts, 171.

Such thinking aided cultural take over. In the words of Sanneh, “Missionary contact proved fatal to indigenous originality”.³³ Converting to Christianity entailed choosing European ideals over African ones and attending mission schools entailed adopting European lifestyles.³⁴ For profiles of Christian traditions represented in this thesis and their relation to political trends in the region, see Appendix I.

A.2. Research Method

A.2.a. Overview of Methodological Issues

The pre-eminence of rationality in epistemological method in Modernity led to the emergence and domination of the empirical method³⁵ in epistemology as the means to certain knowledge or ‘facts.’ It also led to separation between natural science, validated by empirical method, and metaphysics, investigated by philosophy.³⁶

However, since the subjects of social inquiry inextricably lend themselves to both philosophical and empirical inquiry, this polarisation led to indeterminacy in method in the social sciences.³⁷ At the height of the popularity and ‘sanctity’³⁸ of scientism³⁹ and positivism,⁴⁰ the social sciences tried to operate using the empirical method.

³³ Sanneh, *Translating the Message*, 173.

³⁴ Gann, *Central Africa*, 77-78.

³⁵ The empirical method claims to access ‘facts’ independently of variations due to interpretation. Tim May, *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*, Third ed. (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2001), 11.

³⁶ Hughes and Sharrock, *Philosophy of Social Research*, 1-2.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

³⁸ In Anglo-American sociology, positivism and its empirical method peaked during the 1950s and early 1960s. At its peak, it “tended to a marked arrogance, inclined to suppose its own paragon status, and [was] abruptly dismissive of any suggestion that there might be alternative approaches.” *Ibid.*, 16.

³⁹ “This involves uncritically accepting that ‘science’ is both highly distinct from, and superior to, ‘common sense’” or knowledge based on methods other than the empirical one. David Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction*, Second ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2001), 7.

⁴⁰ Positivism explains human behaviour in terms of cause and effect and ‘data’ is collected on the social environment and people’s reactions to it. May, 10-11.

Since the middle of the 1960s, positivism has gradually lost its privilege in social research and the empirical method has just become one among many methods. This has brought epistemological issues back on the agenda particularly with respect to the quest for epistemological certainty.⁴¹

Movement away from the sanctity of the empirical method is the essence of post-modernization. At its extreme is Postmodernity, the decentering of the subject of knowledge and arguing for a collapse of metanarratives and foundations.⁴²

Ironically, post-modernization has liberated “the ‘repressed rivals’ of science – religion, folk knowledge, narrative and myth,”⁴³ including some, like religion, which claim to be based on epistemological certainty just as the empirical method promised. Post-modernizing views have found their greatest legitimacy within the humanities and the area of cultural studies.⁴⁴

Current practice in social research is that the subjects and goals of research justify the adoption and application of methodologies.⁴⁵ As such, methodologies are not judged in terms of ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, but in terms of their usefulness to the goals of research given the nature of the subjects of research.⁴⁶

It also recognizes that the interaction between researchers and researched produces social research data. The researcher does not *collect* it. Finally, it recognizes that theory is “the ability to explain and understand the findings of research within a conceptual framework that makes ‘sense’ of the data”.⁴⁷ As such, epistemological

⁴¹ Hughes and Sharrock, 18.

⁴² “Instead, one discovers multiple positions or positionalities, pluralities of discourses, micro-realities, relativity, diverse truths, multiple centers, pragmatic methodologies, divergent histories, interdisciplinarity, located knowledges, contextuality, historicity, and particular struggles of resistance.” Dwight N. Hopkins, “Postmodernity, Black Theology of Liberation and the U.S.A.,” in *Liberation Theologies, Postmodernity, and the Americas*, ed. David Batstone et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 206. Cf. May, 16; and B. Fay, *Contemporary Philosophy of Social Science: A Multicultural Approach* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 2.

⁴³ May, 17. Cf. S. Seidman, *Contested Knowledge: Social Theory in the Postmodern Era*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998).

⁴⁴ May, 17.

⁴⁵ Hughes and Sharrock, 3. Silverman defines ‘methodology’ as “the choices we make about cases to study, methods of data gathering, forms of data analysis etc. in planning and executing a research study.” Silverman, 4.

⁴⁶ Silverman, 2.

⁴⁷ May, 29.

and ontological constructs provide the overall framework of how we look at and explore reality.⁴⁸ Therefore, making social theory⁴⁹ explicit in order that its presuppositions are open to scrutiny helps the valuation of research findings.⁵⁰

Articulation of social theory is demanded for two reasons. First, it acknowledges the fact that “human beings assert and defend epistemological claims on the basis of collective understanding.”⁵¹ Second, it recognizes that interaction with the research project has the ability to influence the theory in an interactive and reflexive relationship.⁵²

The latter has led to the debate whether the interview, the critical method in our research, can yield information that accurately reflects the social world beyond its own interactive context.⁵³ Positivism, with its roots in Foundationalism,⁵⁴ settled the debate by attempting to perfect the method, the interview, to the point where the information it yields is a mirror reflection of the reality that exists in the social world.

However, the interactive nature of social knowledge is incompatible with such an aspiration. Conversely, extreme deference to the interactive nature of the interview has led some to argue that interview knowledge is context-specific and *invented* to fit the demands of the interactive context of the interview. It does not represent anything else.⁵⁵

This position is equally unacceptable to those who refuse to regard any dominant narrative as totalising, whether that narrative is positivism or interactionism.

⁴⁸ Silverman, 2-3.

⁴⁹ In social research, social theory “informs our understanding of issues, which, in turn, assists us in making research decisions and sense of the world around us.” May, 29.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 2-3.

⁵¹ Hughes and Sharrock, 6.

⁵² May, 29-30.

⁵³ ‘Interactive context’ refers to the recognition that the dynamics between interviewer and interviewee are such that the knowledge they produce is context-specific to the interview and may not necessarily represent truths beyond the interview.

⁵⁴ “The view that true knowledge must rest upon a set of firm, unquestionable set of indisputable truths from which our beliefs may be logically deduced, so retaining the truth value of the foundational premises from which they follow and in terms of which our methods of forming further ideas about the world and investigating it are licensed.” Hughes and Sharrock, 4-5.

⁵⁵ Silverman, 87.

Therefore, we proceed with the understanding that the interview, in spite of its interactive nature, provides access to social realities beyond itself.⁵⁶

The interview is a critical method in our research and the multiple fissures from the ideal text⁵⁷ that inter-subjective communication generates is well documented.

Interviewees often “respond to interviewers through the use of familiar narrative constructs, rather than providing meaningful insights into their subjective view.”⁵⁸

Communication in an interview is fraught with agendas and counter agendas between the interviewer and interviewee and the complex reactions to these that develop. This often leads to responses that are really based on the interviewee’s assessment of the possible motives of the interviewer.⁵⁹

Language, our window into the subject’s world and ours, often plays tricks. “It displaces the very thing it is supposed to represent, so that what is always given is a trace of other things, not the thing...itself.”⁶⁰ In addition, the language of interviewing, like all telling, inevitably fractures the stories in that it is partial to the discourse that it represents in the speaker’s understanding.⁶¹

The process of documenting and analysing interview data is itself fraught with fracturing. “The coding, categorization and typologizing of stories result in telling only parts of stories, rather than presenting them in their ‘wholeness’.”⁶²

In this project, we employ the methods of observing, recording, interviewing, transcribing and analysis of discourse. Observing is interpretive and favours the

⁵⁶ Jody Miller and Barry Glassner, “The ‘inside’ and the ‘Outside’: Finding Realities in Interviews,” in *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, ed. David Silverman (London: SAGE Publications, 1997; reprint, 1998), 99-100 and C. R. Sanders, “Stranger Than Fiction: Insights into the Pitfalls in Post-Modern Ethnography,” *SSI* 17 (1995): 93, 97. In fact, Miller and Glassner argue that “it is only in the context of non-positivistic interviews, which recognize and build on their interactive components...that ‘intersubjective depth’ and ‘deep-mutual understanding’ can be achieved.” Glassner, 100.

⁵⁷ ‘Ideal text’ in the case of the interview is the interviewee’s subjective view as experienced by the interviewees themselves. Glassner, 101.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Robert L. Kahn and Charles F. Cannell, *The Dynamics of Interviewing: Theory, Technique, and Cases* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1957), 6-7. Cf. Carl R. Rogers and F. J. Roethlisberger, “Barriers and Gateways to Communication,” *HBR* 30, no. 4 (1952).

⁶⁰ N. K. Denzin, “Representing Lived Experiences in Ethnographic Texts,” *SSI* 12 (1991): 68.

⁶¹ Glassner, 101.

⁶² K. Charmaz, “Between Positivism and Postmodernism: Implications for Methods,” *SSI* 17 (1995): 60.

subjective knowledge of the researcher. Recording precludes all non-audio communication from the data. Transcribing, particularly where translation is involved, entails approximate representations of what was said. Analysis favours the perspective of the analyst.

All these fissures, however, do not negate the fact that language permits inter-subjectivity and the ability of wilful persons to create and maintain meaningful worlds.⁶³ They also do not negate the fact that interviews yield information about social worlds and ideal texts.⁶⁴ However, they highlight the need to make the subjectivities and fractures that exist in the research process a visible part of the project and thus available for independent examination.⁶⁵

A.2.b. Methodology and Parameters of Research

The research in Zambia examines the relationships between the worldview, epistemological constitution, hermeneutics, and homiletics of specific indigenous preachers. The research is qualitative and we approach it with the understanding that the activities of collecting and analyzing data will simultaneously affect the theoretical elements of our theory, research questions and validity concerns.⁶⁶ Within this design, the following are the components of our research and ways that they interact with each other.

The purpose of the research is to examine the *nature* and *extent* of the influence that the epistemological constitution of the respondents has on their biblical hermeneutics and homiletics. At a micro level, the study is specific research into the Christian faith

⁶³ Cf. L. L. Dawson and R. C. Prus, "Interactionist Ethnography and Postmodern Discourse: Affinities and Disjunctures in Approaching Human Lived Experience," *SSI* 15 (1993): 166.

⁶⁴ Cf. G. Glassner and J. Loughlin, *Drugs in Adolescent Worlds: Burnouts to Straights* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1987), 33., and R. L. Schmit, "Cornerville as Odburate Reality: Retooling the Research Act through Postmodernism," *SSI* 15 (1993): 130.

⁶⁵ D. E. Smith, "Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology," in *Feminism and Methodology*, ed. S. Harding (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1987), 92. Cf. S. Harding, ed., *Feminism and Methodology* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1987), 9; and R. L. Gorden, *Interviewing: Strategy, Techniques, and Tactics* (Homewood, IL: Dorsey, 1987).

⁶⁶ Cf. Leonard Bickman and Debra J. Borg, ed., *Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods* (Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, 1998), 70.

as an interaction between the Bible and African culture⁶⁷ among these respondents. At a macro level, it is specific research into the implications of the “puzzling but exciting affinity between the African religious heritage and the way of life which the OT presupposes and takes for granted.”⁶⁸

Its theoretical premise is that African Christianity is in the process of replacing the foreign epistemological constitution associated with the Modern Missionary Movement with its own. However, since this constitution continues to dominate in African biblical scholarship,⁶⁹ much of this replacing is occurring naturally at the grass roots level without deliberate intention or co-ordination.⁷⁰ Therefore, studying the dynamics between epistemological constitution and hermeneutics at this level provides access to the process by which the African epistemological framework is engaging the Bible apart from epistemologically reconstituted ‘experts.’⁷¹

Technically, the findings do *not* reflect the relationships between epistemological constitution and hermeneutics and homiletics for *all* indigenous preachers in the Eastern Province, Zambia. They only do so for these specific respondents.

However, since the first criterion for their selection is that they be indigenous preachers located in Eastern Province of Zambia, the assumption is that their hermeneutics reflect a common epistemological construct that is consistent with their larger classification as Bantu people, a grouping that exhibits striking similarities at the linguistic level thereby suggesting some common socio-cultural past.⁷² As such, we can cite the results of this analysis in the research into the relationships between epistemological construct and hermeneutics and homiletics in Bantu people at large.

⁶⁷ Cf. J. N. K. Mugambi, “Africa and the Old Testament,” in *Interpreting the Old Testament in Africa*, 16.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁶⁹ Holter, 11-12; Ukpong, “Rereading the Bible,” 4; Deist, “South African Old Testament Studies,” 311-319; and Kashoki, 170-173.

⁷⁰ Cf. H. B. P. Mijoga, *Separate but Same Gospel: Preaching in African Instituted Churches in Southern Malawi*, Kachere Study (Blantyre, Malawi: CLAIM, 2000), 9-15.

⁷¹ Cf. Holter, 16.

⁷² Cf. Page 39 above. Similar research in Bantu populations elsewhere seems to validate this assumption. E.g. H. B. P. Mijoga, *Separate but Same Gospel: Preaching in African Instituted Churches in Southern Malawi*, Kachere Study (Blantyre, Malawi: CLAIM, 2000).; and P. A. Kalilombe, “A Malawian Example: The Bible in Non-Literate Communities,” in *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*, ed. R. S. Sugirtharajah (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991).

The second criterion is that they belong to a Christian tradition. This is important because of the project's focus on biblical hermeneutics. We wanted to examine how preachers use the Bible as spiritual food for their congregations. This presumed a faith relationship with God and commitment to the Bible as God's Word on the part of the preachers and their congregations.

The third criterion is that, within these Christian traditions, the preachers should be in control of their interpretations and applications of Scripture. This is important because there are some Christian traditions where decisions pertaining to texts used and interpretations are centrally given. Where the central authority is not Bantu, such interpretations and applications violate the first criterion in this project.

These criteria were the substantive ones as far as the project was concerned. Within these, we exercised some flexibility. For instance, for logistical reasons, we narrowed the field of research to Katete, Petauke and Chipata districts. This was for two reasons. First, with the project centre of operation located in Katete, these areas were easily accessible to the researchers (the researcher worked an assistant). Second, both researchers are functionally fluent in the languages spoken in the area, including all the languages spoken by the preachers. This eliminated the need for interpretation and translation of the material. However, one interview was recorded in Lusaka, outside the Eastern Province.

The research procedure was generally as follows. The researchers sought the permission of the respondents for their participation in the project. This was obtained before the date of recording or on the day.

When obtaining permission, the researchers identified themselves, and briefly stated the nature and aims of the project. Such disclosure ordinarily included mention of student and ministerial status, the goal of the research project, the need to record "portions of the service, including the sermon", and the need to interview the preacher.

It excluded specific mention that the focus of interest was the preacher's hermeneutics in order to allow the preachers, as much as possible, to deliver their homilies without the constraints generated by prior awareness of an impending sermon analysis and interview by a trained biblical scholar and theological college lecturer. After the homilies, times and places for interviews were set at the convenience of the respondents. The confession by several respondents that prior awareness of the

specific focus of the analysis and interview would have drastically influenced their sermon preparation and delivery vindicated the withholding of this detail.

The interviews were not concerned with substantive hermeneutical issues. They were primarily opportunities for exploring the connections between epistemological constitution and hermeneutical practices from the perspective of the respondent. The epistemological and hermeneutical issues discussed in the interviews were those raised by the sermons. To prepare for this, the researcher listened carefully to each sermon and identified the hermeneutical and epistemological issues to address in the interview. Except for these guidelines, the interviews were unstructured or focussed.⁷³ Generally, the responses given determined the lines of further questioning.

In no instance was permission to record withheld. In one instance, a respondent even recorded his own sermon and brought it to the researcher for analysis. However, several respondents expressed the sentiment that had they known that their sermons were going to be the focus of the interviews they would have tailored them to suit the research, not the needs of their congregations.⁷⁴

The recordings, both sermons and interviews, were transcribed into the languages they were given. These transcriptions constitute the database for the analysis in Chapter 4 below.

Twenty-three (23) responses were used.⁷⁵ Of these, only one⁷⁶ falls outside the geographical parameter we set for ourselves. However, in that it satisfied the substantive criteria, its inclusion does not detract from the thrust of the project.

An interesting finding was that narrowing the geographical parameters to Chipata, Petauke and Katete Districts did not exclude other Bantu traditions out with the province. Both sermons and large portions of the interviews for the two U.C.Z. responses in Katete were in Bemba, a language spoken in the Northern, Luapula and

⁷³ Unstructured or focussed interviews differ from structured ones in their open-ended character. The intention is to hear the perspective of the interviewee and provide for qualitative depth by allowing interviewees to talk about the subject within their own frames of reference. May, 14.

⁷⁴ These confessions came after the sermon and before the interview and are not in the transcripts.

⁷⁵ One interview was discarded because of recording failure. Cf. 'Transcripts', pp. 352-353.

⁷⁶ J. Kakoma, recorded at Tower of Hope Church, Lusaka.

Copperbelt Provinces of Zambia.⁷⁷ This was because both respondents were fluent in Bemba but not in the local Chewa and preaching in English was not an option in their congregation.⁷⁸ Further, at least two respondents within the research parameter were not from Eastern Province.⁷⁹ The methods employed were observation, recording and transcribing, interviewing and analysis of texts and transcripts.

Observation was both *prior* to preaching and interviewing and *during* both processes. Where the researcher had prior acquaintance with the respondents and/or their theological traditions,⁸⁰ this knowledge formed part of the social theory or assumption⁸¹ that he brought into the interviews. Where these were unknown, observation during the recording processes, where applicable,⁸² helped him to form the tentative theories that informed his approach to the interviews. Observation also formed part of the interactive process during the interviews and contributed to their evolution. It assisted the researcher to make spontaneous judgements regarding lines of questioning during the interview.

⁷⁷ See Appendix IX.

⁷⁸ Nkonde is a Bemba currently residing on the Copperbelt Province. Mujumira is Tumbuka (Lundazi, Eastern Province) but was born and raised on the Copperbelt Province and felt more comfortable preaching in Bemba than in any of the languages of the Eastern Province.

⁷⁹ Godwin Nkonde is Bemba and Redson Chisenga is Bisa, both from Northern Province. See Appendix II.

⁸⁰ The researcher was born and raised in the Eastern province of Zambia. He belongs to the Tumbuka tribe of Lundazi District, Eastern Province. He attended the final two years of primary school in Katete during the years 1972-1974. During that period, his family worshipped at Katete Boma R.C.Z (Reformed Church in Zambia) Church, the location of two recordings in this research. In addition, the researcher is currently an ordained minister with the Pentecostal Assemblies of God (Z), P.A.O.G (Z) and has prior professional acquaintance with Bishop Boyd Makukula (Holy Trinity, Chipata) and Rev. Simon Chikamata (Nyanje) both of whom were respondents in this research. Through personal experience, he is also acquainted with the theological traditions of the following churches: Victory Bible Church, P.A.O. G (Z), S. D. A (Seventh Day Adventist), R. C. Z, Tower of Hope, and U. C. Z (United Church of Zambia).

⁸¹ Cf. Silverman, 2; and M. O'Brien, "Social Research and Sociology," in *Researching Social Life*, ed. N. Gilbert (London: SAGE Publications, 1993), 10-11.

⁸² Since the researcher worked with a research assistant, he was not present in all the church services although he conducted all the interviews.

B. Research into Appropriations and Re-appropriations of the Exodus Event within the Bible

In this section, ‘research’ means analysis of interpretations because our aim is to find out how various ‘hearers’ within the Bible appropriate and re-appropriate the Exodus event. By ‘appropriation and re-appropriation’ we mean the way in which texts reflect other texts whether in an overt manner or in a covert manner.⁸³

Given our presupposition that ‘any exegetical approach is contextually coined’, we employ historical critical analysis.⁸⁴ However, we do so without embracing a critical goal of such analysis in Modernity, vis-à-vis the quest for the author’s *singular original* intention in a text.⁸⁵

B.1. Issues pertaining to the ontology and unity of the Old Testament documents and Old Testament theological method

Developments in philosophy have influenced understanding of the OT documents in biblical scholarship. In particular, historical critical analysis threw into greater relief the bases for perspectives towards the Scriptures for periods preceding Modernity. For example, inquiry into the development of the OT corpus and its use showed that the Jewish community in the period during which the Hebrew canon was coming into

⁸³ Yair Zakovitch, “*and You Shall Tell Your Son...*”: *The Concept of the Exodus in the Bible* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1991), 15.

⁸⁴ The common denominator for historical critical methods is the agreement that “texts should be interpreted in their historical contexts, in light of the literary and cultural conventions of their time.” John J. Collins, “Historical Criticism and Its Post-Modern Critics,” Gunning Lecture Series (Edinburgh: The University of Edinburgh, 2 November 2004), 3. Cf. John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study*, New ed. (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1996), 10-19.

⁸⁵ Collins concedes that “the meaning intended by an ancient author can, at best, only be reconstructed tentatively.” Collins, 3.

final form expected the books to cohere.⁸⁶ We find a similar presupposition in pre-critical (pre-modern) Christian biblical study.⁸⁷

Historical critical analysis also opened new ways of regarding Scripture and doing theology. Starting from the presumption that a scholar can and ought to divest him or herself of any philosophical presuppositions, 19th and 20th century biblical scholarship studied the Scriptures as a corpus evidencing the story of Israelite religion, a succession and evolution of a people's religious traditions.⁸⁸

A positive outcome of such analysis was the finding that theological interests could obscure the historical particularities of OT faith in the interest of systematisation and harmonisation of the OT material.⁸⁹ Its negative side has been to cloud and hence 'discredit' the grounds for biblical faith.⁹⁰ For example, one result of concerted efforts to understand the form (form criticism) and sources (source criticism) of the biblical material has been the fragmentation of the text leaving the reader with only bits and pieces.⁹¹

Modern scholarship operated under the premise that exclusion of philosophical presuppositions was possible and desirable, and underplayed or overlooked the philosophical base of its epistemological method.⁹² Such scholarship logically led to

⁸⁶ Geza Vermes, "Bible and Midrash: Early Old Testament Exegesis," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. Peter R. Ackroyd and Christopher F. Evans (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 209.

⁸⁷ John Goldingay, *Theological Diversity and the Authority of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmanns Publishing Company, 1987), 2.

⁸⁸ "It wanted to be strictly scientific and historical in approach. This led to advances in our understanding of the OT's origins and meaning, but it excluded the writing of theology because that seemed a subjective enterprise. Scholars wrote histories of Israelite religion instead." John Goldingay, *Approaches to Old Testament Interpretation*, Updated ed. (Leicester, England: Apollos, 1990), 17. Cf. P. Wernberg-Moller, "Is There an Old Testament Theology?," *HB* 59 (1960-1): 27.

⁸⁹ E.g. Biblical theology's origin was as maid to systematics. Goldingay, *Approaches*, 24. Cf. L. Kohler, *Old Testament Theology* (New York: Harper, 1957), 7; P. van Imschoot, *Theology of the Old Testament I* (New York: Desclee, 1965), 5.

⁹⁰ Gerald Bray, *Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present* (Downer's Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 222-223.

⁹¹ Brevard S. Childs, *Exodus: A Critical Theological Commentary*, The Old Testament Library (London/Louisville: SCM Press/Westminster Press, 1974), xiv-xv.

⁹² Goldingay, *Approaches*, 17-18. Cf. Kohler, 93. N. K. Gottwald, "Walther Eichrodt's 'Theology of the Old Testament'," *ET* 74 (1962-3): 209-212; H. H. Rowley, *The Re-Discovery of the Old Testament* (London/Philadelphia: Clarke/Westminster, 1946), 14-18; and J. D. Smart, *The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church* (Philadelphia/London: Westminster/SCM, 1970), 133-136.

theologies of Israel's historical traditions and nothing else.⁹³ Advocates of theological presuppositions endeavoured to accommodate the findings of historical criticism by trying various ways of arranging the OT material "so as to allow its own internal dynamics to emerge rather than be submerged in an alien scheme."⁹⁴

However, they still approached this task through the modern epistemological method meaning that their theologies were largely "submerged in an alien scheme."⁹⁵

Vestiges of systematization persist in the search for "a structure of OT theology" and "the right central concept from which to view OT faith as a whole."⁹⁶

This is partly the basis for the success of James Barr's criticism⁹⁷ of the Biblical Theology Movement (BTM)⁹⁸ although, as we have shown elsewhere, his criticism is based on the flawed premise that beginning with a philosophical commitment is inherently wrong as it makes the theory presumptive evidence for the interpretation of 'facts.'⁹⁹ He would rather that mind-set be established after 'a fair analysis of language in keeping with *proper systematic examination* or description of a language.'¹⁰⁰ (*Italics, mine*).

⁹³ Goldingay, *Approaches*, 27-28, 126. Cf. Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2 vols., vol. 1: The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions (Edinburgh/New York: Oliver & Boyd/Harper, 1962; reprint, London: SCM, 1975) and *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 2: The Theology of Israel's Prophetic Traditions (Edinburgh/New York: Oliver & Boyd/Harper, 1965; reprint, London: SCM, 1975).

⁹⁴ Goldingay, *Approaches*, 25. Cf. W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 2 vols. (London/Philadelphia: SCM/Westminster, 1961 and 1967); T. C. Vriezen, *An Outline of Old Testament Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958); and G. A. F. Knight, *A Christian Theology of the Old Testament* (Richmond/London: John Knox/SCM, 1959).

⁹⁵ "As an analytic formal discipline, OT theology needs to define terms clearly and relate these terms to each other." Goldingay, *Approaches*, 25. Cf. N. W. Porteous, "Old Testament and History," *ASTI* 8 (1970-1): 25-27., and R. E. Clements, "The Problem of Old Testament Theology," *LQHR*, no. 190 (1965): 12-13.

⁹⁶ Goldingay, *Approaches*, 26, 27. Cf. C. Westermann, ed., *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics* (Richmond: John Knox, 1963), 24-25.

⁹⁷ Childs, himself not a sympathiser of textual fragmentation, discusses the legitimacy and impact of this criticism. Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), 72.

⁹⁸ This movement sought, among other things, to counteract the tendency to fragment the biblical traditions through literary criticism by arguing for a 'biblical mind-set' as the appropriate basis for epistemological method in biblical scholarship. Barr, *Semantics*, 5, 9. Cf. Childs, *Biblical Theology*, 35, 39-41., and Rowley, 2.

⁹⁹ Barr, *Semantics*, 9, 14, 36. Cf. Deist: "Texts and their situations of origin, texts and their authors cannot be divorced without loss of textual meaning... Who divorces a text from its context focusing purely on the co-text invariably *supplies* a context for that text, namely the context of his own world, and thus produces underhand eisegesis". Deist, "Again: Method(S) of Exegesis," 85.

¹⁰⁰ Barr, *Semantics*, 23-25. Cf. Nyirenda, 83-87.

Goldingay seemingly recognizes the inherently philosophical nature of method in his argument for a stance of empathy in the investigation of OT faith.¹⁰¹ However, his basis for ‘empathy’ is not clear. He thinks that it is possible to suspend questions of truth about what one is studying and still attain “one valuable form of understanding.”¹⁰² Conversely, he admits the impossibility of suspending one’s beliefs and framework of thinking and this aspiration’s inconsistency with reflection itself.¹⁰³ Consequently, he advocates open recognition of presuppositions among scholars and dialogue among scholars starting from different frameworks because of the difficulty of epistemological self-criticism.¹⁰⁴

In the current scenario, we find tension between the historicity of the OT material and inescapability from one’s presuppositions compounded by postmodern plurality of perspectives. In spite of its diminished status, the Modern historical critical method has not gone away.¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, it now has to contend with the challenge posed by findings from disciplines such as sociology, cultural anthropology and an increasing tendency to re-engage biblical scholarship with existential issues in general. This has resulted in a pluralism of approaches that was inconceivable mid-twentieth century.¹⁰⁶

B.2. Text and Interpretation

We examine intra-biblical appropriations and re-appropriations because we recognize that there already exists a hermeneutic (or hermeneutics) within the biblical material that can provide guidelines for our own interpretation of

¹⁰¹ Goldingay, *Approaches*, 19. Cf. H. W. Robinson, *Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press/Clarendon, 1946), 281-282; and R. C. Dentan, *Preface to Old Testament Theology*, Revised ed. (New York: Seabury, 1963), 114-116.

¹⁰² Goldingay, *Approaches*, 20.

¹⁰³ Cf. the limitations in the phenomenological method in religious studies of efforts to suspend presuppositions (‘*performing epoche*’) and to achieve empathy (‘*performing empathetic interpolation*’). James L. Cox, *Expressing the Sacred: An Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1992), 20-21, 24-28, 57.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁰⁵ Bray, 462.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 462-463, 465.

Scripture.¹⁰⁷ As such, this study is part of the investigation of the kerygma of various biblical traditions in their context in the history of Israel, although it does not share the preclusion among some in such scholarship of the presence of a theological meta-narrative in the biblical material.¹⁰⁸ It also belongs to the type of biblical scholarship that takes the beliefs, convictions and practices of the people of faith seriously.¹⁰⁹

Detractors of this approach essentially diminish or disregard the value of any inquiry into the historicity of the biblical material. They seek to start from the text in its final form because historical criticism obscures the present, canonical text, and the believing community's witness in the text itself to the way the historical world is actualized. It also overlooks the way the church, following the lead of the synagogue, accepted the final text as canonical and therefore the vehicle of revelation and instruction.¹¹⁰ This is a direct reaction to the fragmentation of the text noted above.¹¹¹

The concern is legitimate in that, we would argue, any historical critical investigation of biblical traditions that does not take seriously the view inherent in the texts that the corpus is inspired and authoritative for its people is hiding behind scholarship to perpetuate judgements on the texts from extra-textual positions.

However, the notion that we must read the canonical text as an authoritative corpus in its own right and apart from any inquiry into its historical realities excludes *the people* and circumstances of the biblical texts, the concrete loci of their reception, from the discussion of biblical hermeneutics. The same objection applies to the numerous literary analyses of Scripture that are indifferent to the historicity of the texts.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Goldingay, *Approaches*, 129. Cf. M. Fishbane, "Torah and Tradition," in *Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament*, ed. D. A. Knight (London/Philadelphia: SPCK/Fortress, 1977), 286.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. W. Brueggemann and H.W. Wolf, *The Vitality of Old Testament Traditions* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1975).

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 4.

¹¹⁰ E.g. Childs, *Biblical Theology*, 141-142; Childs, *Exodus*, xv; Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia/London: Fortress/SCM, 1979), 74-77. Cf. David Reimer, "Book of the Month," *ET* 113, no. 2 (2001): 51-51; and Bray, 462.

¹¹¹ Cf. P. 74.

¹¹² Cf. Bray, 482-486, with James Barr, *Reading the Bible as Literature* (Manchester: John Rylands Library, 1973).

To be fair to ‘final-form’ advocates, the status of Scripture as ‘written’ does introduce new possibilities to biblical interpretation. Scripture in this state has the potential to generate, and *has generated*, all kinds of readings that *do not* seriously consider the histories and circumstances of the material.¹¹³ Add readings that *do* consider the histories and circumstances of the material but from unacknowledged philosophical presuppositions, and the enormity and complexity of the task of interpretation begins to become apparent.

We began this section by acknowledging that the earliest OT interpretation took place within the OT itself as later writers studied, pondered, applied, expounded, and quoted earlier ones.¹¹⁴ Here, we already notice appropriations that *seemingly do not* regard the histories and circumstances of the material cited as constraining meanings in the modern sense.¹¹⁵

In the light of such appropriations, some have argued that the priority of the ‘final’ written texts to generate meanings is not subject to historical criticism.¹¹⁶ Despite this potential, we approach our analysis from the understanding that the socio-cultural and historical realities of the texts have priority over any extra-biblical frameworks.

B.3. Research Method

In this thesis, we do not delve in depth into the debates about the historical traditions of Exodus although we start from the premise that the historicity and socio-cultural realities in the texts have priority. We engage in as much historical-critical detail as is necessary to establish reasonably the meanings of the texts we use.

¹¹³ James Barr, *Judaism - Its Continuity with the Bible* (Southampton: University Press, 1968), 14-15. Cf. J. Mays, “Historical and Canonical: Recent Discussion About the Old Testament and Christian Faith,” in *Magnalia Dei, the Mighty Acts of God: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Memory of G. Ernest Wright*, ed. Werner E. Lemke F. M. Cross, and Patrick D. Miller, Jr. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1976), 514-515.

¹¹⁴ Cf. J. Weingreen, “Interpretation, History Of: Within O T,” in *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. G. A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1976), 436-438; and Vermes, 199, 228-229.

¹¹⁵ “Narrative, law, prophecy, and other material is thus continually re-applied on the presupposition that its significance for Israel was not limited to the situation in which it first arose. It is of ongoing significance as God’s word.” Goldingay, *Approaches*, 133.

¹¹⁶ E.g. Childs, *Exodus*, xv; Goldingay, *Approaches*, 133; and J. A. Sanders, “Adaptable for Life: The Nature and Function of Canon,” in *Magnalia Dei*, 541-543.

Our intention is to identify the connections between appropriation and epistemological constitution. We limit ourselves to four texts that allude to the Exodus tradition and event as found in BHS. We consider the associations between tradition and appropriation in these texts in the light of the epistemological constitution outlined in Chapter 2 in order to establish the contours of the epistemology at play. We also consider them from the theological presupposition intrinsic in the material. All this reflects our commitment to multi-disciplinary biblical interpretation.¹¹⁷

We are convinced that we can attempt an analysis of the epistemology in the appropriations and re-appropriations and relate it to an Old Testament epistemological constitution without resolving all the historical critical difficulties in these texts. We are also aware that literary and historical critical approaches are debates that occurred in Western scholarship and based on Western epistemologies. However, we think that the issues they raise can be useful to approaches that are based on different epistemological frameworks.

Our position is that the choice is no longer between objective scholarship and subjective scholarship, but between the sort of subjective scholarship that is aware of its presuppositions and that which is not.¹¹⁸ Therefore, there is need for any researcher to declare his subjectivities. This researcher is an African born and raised in Zambia. He has experience of both rural and urban Zambian life and has functional knowledge of all the languages used in the grounded research for this project. In addition, he is a product of British schooling in the postcolony including sitting for Cambridge O levels set and examined in Britain. Further, he has been through four colleges either patterned after western institutions or situated in the West.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Cf. Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downer's Grove, Illinois/Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 1998), xxi; Childs, *Exodus*, ix-x; and E. M. North, "Eugene A. Nida: An Appreciation," in *Language, Culture and Religion: In Honor of Eugene Nida*, ed. Matthew Black and W. A. Smalley (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), vii-xx.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Iain W. Provan, *Ideologies, Literary and Critical: Reflections on Recent Writings on the History of Israel* (Vancouver, British Columbia: Regent College Publishing, 1997), 11.

¹¹⁹ These include the *Natural Resources Development College* in Lusaka, Zambia, affiliated with the University of Zambia and operating with Belgian technical assistance during his tenure there (Dip. Agric. Sc.), *Trans-Africa Theological College* in Kitwe, Zambia, patterned after Pentecostal Assemblies of God colleges in Canada and operating using Canadian programmes and materials and with the technical assistance of Canadian personnel (B Th.), *Regent College*, Vancouver, Canada (Dip. C.S. and M.C.S [OT]) and *The University of Edinburgh* (MTh) and PhD candidacy.

Part II: Epistemology and its Relation to Hermeneutical Practices

Chapter 4: Data Analysis – The Hermeneutics and Homiletics of Indigenous Preachers in Eastern Zambia

In this chapter, we consider the first of two investigations into the relationships between epistemological constitution and hermeneutical practice, the research undertaken among select indigenous preachers Zambia. In our analysis, we classify the research data into categories that will enable us to relate it to the presumed epistemological constitution of the respondents in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6, we will undertake an analysis of intra-biblical appropriations and re-appropriations of the Exodus even and relate it to the presumed epistemological constitution in the material in Chapter 7.

For ease of analysis, we have organised the data in relation to the theological traditions of the respondents outlined in Appendix I. This enables the reader to relate theological perspective not just to the respondents' presumed epistemological constitution, but also the theological influences that are a critical part of their hermeneutics.

We will critically analyse the recorded homilies and interviews and organise them in forms that permit us to isolate clear patterns from them. As intimated above,¹ this analysis is limited to epistemological as opposed to substantive hermeneutical issues.

It is essentially in the interviews following the homilies that we explore questions of epistemology and find the links for delineating conceptual patterns in the homilies. Therefore, we will approach the homilies through the interviews.

In order to isolate the epistemological themes, we have organised the data around common themes that re-occur within it. We take great care to ensure that the material for the epistemological themes arises from the data and that all the citations in support of particular themes are valid.

The themes occur as explicit and implicit references in the data. Further, some themes form the epistemological and theological background for the interpretations given. They are epistemological because they derive from the respondent's epistemological constitution. They are theological because they are the theological

¹ Page 71.

starting points for the ensuing biblical interpretations. They broadly include the following: People of God, Unity of Scripture, Immanence of God, Biblical Interpretation and Divine Effect.

A. Epistemological and Theological Background

A number of themes constitute the epistemological and theological foundation and starting point for all the respondents in the data. We can generally classify these as follows: 'People of God,' 'Immanence of God,' 'Unity of Scripture' and 'Redemption.'

A.1. People of God

All the respondents in our case studies start either explicitly or implicitly from the premise that as Christians they belong to the commonwealth of Israel and are the people of God.² For Kanyemba, this homogeneity means divine addresses to Israel in the Scriptures are also addresses to Christians today.³ She dismisses Stott's⁴ insistence that the referents in the Scriptures ought to be distinguished from contemporary believers unless the texts explicitly state so as the position of a person who does not believe in the Bible.⁵

For W. Palula, continuity between Israel and the contemporary worshipper is because they worship the same God. However, within this worship, Christ is a fulfilment of the essentially typical nature of Old Testament worship. Consequently, the contemporary worshipper knows the Grace of God in Christ in ways that the Old

² The only exception was the Old Apostolic Church that sees itself as directly descended from the twelve apostles and hence possessing a spiritual hermeneutic that other Christian traditions lack.

³ Susan Phiri Kanyemba, "Excursus I: 'A Change for the Better.' Homily Delivered on Women's Sunday at Victory Bible Church, Katete Congregation, 10 July 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 5, Katete, Zambia.

⁴ John Stott, *Evangelical Truth: A Personal Plea for Unity, Integrity & Faithfulness* (Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 57.

⁵ Kanyemba, p. 5-6.

Testament worshipper did not. However, there is no difference in the dynamics of faith in God so that the experiences of Old Testament worshippers serve as precious lessons for the contemporary believer's spiritual pilgrimage. Further, God's dealings with Israel in the Bible are paradigmatic of his dealings with contemporary believers. This justifies a hermeneutic of reflection, essentially the study of all encounters between God and Israel in the Bible with a view to learn from them.⁶

Likewise, John Phiri sees the Scriptures in their entirety as the story of human beings' struggles in serving the living God with, for various reasons, different levels of success and failure.⁷ This is as true of modern believers as it was for Israel and evidences their spiritual homogeneity. On this account, the generation that God rescued from Egypt are "our ancestors."⁸

He identifies his congregation in Chipata, Zambia with the congregation of Israel while fully aware that the two belong to different cultures and times. He is also aware that the Scriptures were written to people in specific spiritual circumstances and for influencing them in specific ways.⁹ Finally, he is aware that the advent of Christ affected the worship of God in ways that often required discontinuing some practices.¹⁰ However, he does not see these qualifications as affecting the core nature of the worship of God such as devotion and holiness.¹¹

Charlton Phiri understands worshipping God in spirit and in truth¹² to be the same in both the Old and New Testaments.¹³ Therefore, it is perfectly legitimate to search the Old Testament narratives for an example of a person who worshipped God in spirit

⁶ W. Palula, "Excursus III: 'Cifundo ca Mulungu ca Muyayaya.' Homily Delivered at Katete Seventh Day Adventist Church, 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 2-3, 7-9, 10-12, Katete, Zambia.

⁷ John Phiri, "Excursus XIX: 'Kutumikira Mulungu Kulinga Kudzipatura.' Homily Delivered at Chipata RCZ Church on the Occasion of the Induction of a Group of Boys into the Boys Brigade, 24 August 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 2, Chipata, Zambia.

⁸ "Makolo athu." Phiri, p. 2, 12-13. Cf. Exod 14.

⁹ Ibid., p. 9-10, 12. He believes that God dealt with the people in the Scriptures the way He did because of their condition and circumstances. Therefore, we may not expect that He will deal with worshippers today in exactly the same way although both are the people of God. Phiri, p. 13-14.

¹⁰ This is because much that was adumbrated in OT worship was fulfilled in Christ. Phiri, p. 12-14.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 13.

¹² John 4:21-24.

¹³ Charlton Phiri, "Excursus XX: 'True Worshippers Never Lose Out.' A Homily Delivered at Pilgrim Wesleyan Church, Chipata, Zambia, 24 August 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 13-14, Chipata, Zambia.

and truth according to Christ's teaching in the New Testament. Abraham is such a person and his thoughts and decisions characterise a true worshipper of God.¹⁴

Khetson Mbewe bases his affirmation of continuity between his congregation and Israel on shared humanity, faith, the immutability of God and a common adversary, Satan. Common trials of faith as also experience of the power of God at work evidence a common identity.¹⁵ The right to become a child of God through faith in Christ¹⁶ places the modern believer in the commonwealth of elect Israel in the Old Testament.¹⁷

Mbewe concedes chronological differences. First, God spoke to Israel directly through His chosen servants while He speaks to us through the Scriptures.¹⁸ Second, the advent of Christ means the contemporary believer has the benefit of the exposition of the Scriptures that Christ brought.¹⁹ However, the essence of these messages is the same. Therefore, the Word of God to Israel is the Word of God to the modern believer, a resource for instruction in serving God. The Bible is "our book".²⁰

Respondents who do not directly address this matter in their sermons and interviews betray their implicit understanding of continuity between Israel and the Christian when they embrace Palula's hermeneutic of reflection. There was one exception to the consensus above, the Old Apostolic Church. According to their foundational narrative, the twelve apostles distinguished themselves from the rest of the disciples by continuing with Jesus when the rest stopped.²¹ To them, Jesus explained the

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 2-8, 11-13. Cf. Gen 22:1-7.

¹⁵ Khetson Mbewe, "Excursus XV: 'Kuooloka Madzudzo Kufika ku Umoyo Watsopano.' A Homily Delivered at M'chini PAOG Assembly, Chipata, 17 August 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 15-16, Chipata, Zambia.

¹⁶ John 1:12.

¹⁷ Mbewe, p. 16.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 13-14. However, see how direct speech is essentially replicated in the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Mbewe, p. 14.

¹⁹ Mbewe, p. 22.

²⁰ "Nilathu." Mbewe, p. 19.

²¹ This narrative is rather jumbled because it borrows material from several unrelated passages. Therefore, 70 (or 72) disciples whom Jesus commissioned for a task (Luke 10:1), returned victoriously but were told to rejoice not in what they had witnessed but in that their names were written in the book of life. 60 were displeased that Jesus was taking credit for their mission and left. However, the only narrative of displeased disciples abandoning Jesus in the Gospels is in John 6:41-71 and the reason there was their difficulty in appreciating his teaching (particularly see vv. 60-71).

“secret”²² of his kingdom, essentially a hermeneutic for seeing the spiritual meanings of Scripture (as opposed to ‘physical,’ historical critical meanings). The numerous other Christian traditions today are descended from the 60 who went away.²³

Therefore, as descendants of this exclusive tradition, Old Apostolic Church preachers possess the ability to ‘see’ the spiritual meanings of Scripture.²⁴ They are the true people of God continuous with Israel in the Old Testament.

A.2. Unity and Continuity of Scripture

‘Bible’ and ‘Scripture’ are used interchangeably. All the respondents understand the Bible to cohere on two fronts.

First, it coheres in its status as inspired by God.²⁵ Sakala sees this as ample justification for resorting to cross-referencing in spite of the danger of citing texts whose support is not borne out by careful historical critical exposition. Inspiration entails divine testimony and logically leads to the understanding that the Bible does not contradict itself theologically.²⁶

Second, it coheres in its testimony to a common message. Based on a generic understanding of Scripture, the respondents both appropriate the spiritual experiences of the biblical characters as of their spiritual luminaries and read the Scriptures through their own faith experiences.

To Chisenga, the Bible from Genesis to Revelation has one central message namely, the redemption of humanity.²⁷ This, not just the fact of its inspiration, is what makes cross-referencing valid.

²² “*Cisinsi*.”

²³ L. Phiri, “Excursus XII: Untitled Homily Delivered at Old Apostolic Church, Katete Stores Congregation, 3 August 2003,” Sermon and Interview, p. 8-9, 16-18, Katete, Zambia.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16, 17-19.

²⁵ θεόπνευστος, “God-breathed.” 2 Tim 3: 16.

²⁶ L. Sakala, “Excursus X: ‘Umoyo wa Tsopano.’ A Homily Delivered at Pilgrim Wesleyan Church, Katete, 2003,” Sermon and Interview, p. 19, Katete, Zambia.

²⁷ Redson Chisenga, “Excursus II: ‘Why Should We Praise God?’ Homily Delivered at Burning Bush Assembly, Katete, 2003,” Sermon and Interview, p. 8, Katete, Zambia.

John Phiri sees the Scriptures cohering in their witness to the people of God in their worship, the challenges that they face and the resolutions of those challenges.²⁸ Their witness is historical and specific but the issues that they cover are generic to worshippers of every generation.²⁹

For the same reason, Chisenga applies Christ's words to the seven churches³⁰ into words of commendation, rebuke, invitation and promise to his audience.³¹ For him, the seven churches represent the entire church age and not necessarily because of Dispensationalism.³²

Charlton Phiri reads Abraham's experience³³ to glean the struggles and triumphs of faith, obedience and worship for the benefit of his audience.³⁴ Mbewe examines the reaction of the elder son³⁵ to highlight the vices of self-centred Christians.³⁶ Kakoma examines the relationship of the younger son with his father³⁷ to highlight the sense of security and boldness that knowing that you are loved engenders in the believer.³⁸

²⁸ Phiri, "Excursus XIX," p. 2.

²⁹ In this regard, he argues that the lessons in the Bible cover the spiritual conditions of humanity for all time, including contemporary and futuristic elements (in the eschatological elements of Scripture). *Ibid.*, p. 17.

³⁰ Rev 2:1-7.

³¹ Redson Chisenga, "Excursus XVIII: 'The Church in God's Perspective.' Homily Preached at Trinity Temple, Chipata, 18 August 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 2, 3-5, Chipata, Zambia.

³² Chisenga, "Excursus XVIII," p. 11. For the perspective of Dispensationalism, see C. J. H. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004), 399-403.

³³ Gen 22:1-7.

³⁴ Phiri, "Excursus XX," p. 12.

³⁵ Luke 15:25-32.

³⁶ S. L. Mbewe, "Excursus XXI: 'Self Life.' A Homily Delivered at Channel of Blessings Apostolic Church, 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 1-13, Katete, Zambia.

³⁷ Luke 15:11-32.

³⁸ J. Kakoma, "Excursus VIII: 'The Love of the Father.' Homily Delivered at Tower of Hope Assembly, Lusaka, 2003," Sermon and interview, p. 1-7, Lusaka, Zambia.

A.3. Immanence of God

The immanence of God refers to God's presence and interaction with the Christian. As epistemological foundation, it refers to the intimate involvement of spiritual forces in the affairs of humankind. This corresponds with the African cosmology outlined in Chapter 2. As theological foundation, it refers to both the intimate involvement of God in the affairs of His people and Satan's adversarial activities against the people of God.

We will discuss God's involvement with the preacher in sermon preparation and delivery processes and his involvement with the congregation under 'Biblical Interpretation' and 'Divine Effect.' Here we merely discuss immanence in general terms.

Makukula³⁹ gives perhaps the most lucid expose of immanence among all the respondents. Spiritual authorities are over all human thought, practice, and existence. They fall under two principal beings, God and Satan, under whom are numerous other beings. Seducing spirits fall under the dominion of Satan, the ruler of this world.⁴⁰ Human beings are either under the dominion of God or of Satan. Salvation essentially means deliverance from the dominion of Satan to God's rule and dominion.⁴¹ He argues that the African understands the spiritual realm from his cultural context.⁴²

John Phiri considers dominion of Satan to be the default scenario for humanity from birth.⁴³ Transition to the dominion of God is through salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.⁴⁴

Nkhonjera's opening prayer acknowledges God's presence and requests the banishment of adversarial spirits thereby betraying a pre-understanding of both

³⁹ Boyd Makukula, "Excursus XVI: Untitled Homily Delivered at Trinity Temple, Chipata, 17 August 2003," Sermon and Interview, Chipata, Zambia.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 18. Cf. Eph 2:2-3.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 14-15, 17, 18-19, 21.

⁴² Makukula, p. 23-24.

⁴³ Phiri, "Excursus XIX," p. 11.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 12, 18.

epistemological and theological immanence. It also acknowledges the superiority of God's power over that of "the enemy".⁴⁵

For Redson Chisenga, humans live and die at God's discretion. Consequently, to affirm that God is the one who heals all our diseases⁴⁶ is to recognize that ultimately, God sustains human life.⁴⁷ God's discretion and dominion extend to the successes or failures of modern medicine as also to anything that perpetuates human life.

Christian living is essentially fighting spiritual battles with a Satan who is constantly plotting to undermine the Christian's subservience to God.⁴⁸ This suggests that ultimate dominion belongs to God.

Kakoma sees the parallels between his keen awareness and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and his African cosmology as a potential to be exploited in biblical hermeneutics, not disparaged and sacrificed for rationalism as was the case with early Western missionaries.⁴⁹ Mujumira echoes this criticism of Western missionaries and considers their oversight responsible for the way Christians continue to appeal to spiritual mediums when faced with a crisis. Their presentation of the Gospel failed to engage the African's cosmology.⁵⁰

An attendee at Sakala's church equated stopping going to the witchdoctor with repenting.⁵¹ The rationale seems to be that seeing the witchdoctor is tantamount to submitting to the spiritual powers over the witchdoctor. This rationale is also behind condemnations of this practice from other respondents. For Makukula, seducing spirits are behind the medicines of the witchdoctor and their goal is to draw people away from God (assuming the patient is a Christian).⁵² For John Phiri, using charms

⁴⁵ Nkhonjera, "Excursus XI: 'Team Work.' A Homily Delivered at Victory Bible Church, Katete, 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 1, Katete, Zambia.

⁴⁶ Ps 103:3b.

⁴⁷ Chisenga, "Excursus II," p. 3.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁹ Kakoma, p. 20.

⁵⁰ David Mujumira, "Excursus XIII: 'Growing in Christ.' a Homily Delivered at St. Paul's United Church of Zambia, Katete, 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 12, Katete, Zambia.

⁵¹ Sakala, p. 14.

⁵² Makukula, p. 4.

and wearing amulets (prescribed by witchdoctors) is no less than serving other gods and ultimately Satan (as opposed to the Living God).⁵³

The discussion above clearly shows an understanding that human beings are participants in a world ruled by spiritual beings. They may choose wittingly or unwittingly to serve Satan or they may wittingly choose to serve God. However, independence is not an option.

A.4. Redemption

All the respondents perceive the saving work of Christ to be their entry point into the commonwealth of Israel as the people of God. Having so entered, they participate in the spiritual heritage of Israel in line with the fulfilments and clarifications that Christ brought.

For Palula, the parable of the Prodigal Son⁵⁴ spells out the components of this entry. He lived in sin (hence feeding pigs, unclean animals according to Leviticus and thus indicating a sinful lifestyle), came to his senses and returned (repentance) to his father (God) and received forgiveness (the Grace of God in Christ).⁵⁵ The Grace of God in Christ is not a new proviso. Rather, it is the fulfilment of what the tabernacle rites in the Old Testament adumbrated. Christ came to fulfil, not erase the provisions of worship found in the Old Testament within the same continuum of faith.⁵⁶

For John Phiri, the inclination to worship God is basic to human nature and transcends time. In the Scriptures, it stretches from Genesis to Revelation. Essentially, it is actualized by choice in the light of revelation of God and his ways and lostness. Without choice, "it is not possible to serve God".⁵⁷

⁵³ Phiri, "Excursus XIX," p. 5.

⁵⁴ Luke 15:11f.

⁵⁵ Palula, p. 9-10.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 8-9, 11. For instance, the blood of the lamb that was applied to the he-goat that was taken into the wilderness "stood for Jesus Christ."

⁵⁷ Phiri, "Excursus XIX," p. 3.

Israel's bondage in Egypt typifies human bondage to Satan and her deliverance bears "all sorts of parallel aspects to Christ's work."⁵⁸ In spite of clear historical and cultural differences between Israel in the Old Testament and his congregation, the specifications of entry point is the only theological difference between them.⁵⁹

The Christian's entry point is Christ who is essentially the fullness of Old Testament revelation and this entails discontinuing aspects of Old Testament practice.⁶⁰ For example, Grace in the New Testament advocates repentance⁶¹ for adultery where the Old Testament advocated stoning to death.⁶² This is because the Gospel does not discriminate between sins in both its condemnation of them and its power to absolve those who confess them and repent. This necessitates judicious reading of the Old Testament to distinguish between what has been superseded by the advent of Christ and what has not.

Further, God's dealings with His people in the Scriptures were occasional. This necessitates judicious reading of the texts to distinguish between the issues that God was dealing with there and those of specific people of God today.

For these two reasons, Phiri is a strong advocate of historical critical analysis of texts in order to identify continuities and discontinuities and to make Scripture the Word of God to contemporary people of God.⁶³

Khetson Mbewe identifies calling upon the name of the Lord⁶⁴ as the Christian's entry point into the commonwealth of Israel. As the people of God, Christians identify with the experiences of Israel, the people of God.⁶⁵

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 11.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 12.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 12-13.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 14-15, 17-19. Cf. John 8:1-11.

⁶² Lev 20:10-11; Deut 22:22.

⁶³ Phiri, "Excursus XIX," p. 14.

⁶⁴ Cf. John 1:12.

⁶⁵ These include the power to perform miracles like Moses and the expectation that God will deliver them from all difficulties and transgressions. Mbewe, "Excursus XV," p. 15, 17-18.

However, in identifying with the people of God in the Old Testament, Christians take into account New Testament teaching because they are followers of Christ as ‘the one who explains more fully’ and the one who enacted salvation.⁶⁶

The above constitutes the epistemological and theological pre-understanding that informs the hermeneutics below.

B. Biblical Interpretation

Using Scripture to meet the spiritual needs of specific congregations raises an immediate problem because, with the exception of the Old Apostolic Church,⁶⁷ they all agree that the biblical texts were written in specific historical contexts and addressed specific people and problems. They also agree that it is not possible to re-live the *precise* circumstances of the biblical audiences.

The challenge then is making Scripture spiritual food for people who clearly belong to different times and cultures and who have different sets of circumstances yet require divine counsel from the Scriptures. This is critical because there is consensus that for the Scriptures to be relevant today the starting point ought to be the circumstances of the congregation, not the biblical text.

For Kakoma this means intimate knowledge of your congregation: the situation, their lives, their needs. Armed with this knowledge, the preacher goes to the Scriptures and searches them, the heart open to God’s direction, for appropriate texts to use in addressing the circumstances of the congregation. For, whereas there is no dispute that the Scriptures are historical and inspired, they need to address the spiritual needs of contemporary people.⁶⁸ Mere historical critical exposition of biblical texts is pointless as far as the congregations are concerned.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 21.

⁶⁷ Pp. 84-85.

⁶⁸ Kakoma, p. 10-11. Also see Simon Chikamata, “Excursus IV: Untitled Homily Delivered at Nyanje Assembly of God Church on the Occasion of the Installation of Pastor Jerry Manda and the Dedication of the New Sanctuary, 2003,” Sermon and Interview, p. 13-15, Nyanje, Eastern Province, Zambia.

⁶⁹ Kakoma, p. 10-11. Cf. Chikamata, p. 14.

Mujumira's denomination practices a homiletical tradition where a group of leaders develops a lectionary for specified periods. This lectionary provides the themes and the biblical texts (as suggestions). Nevertheless, even here, the approach is to wait before God, discern the spiritual needs of the people and to suggest appropriate texts to meet these needs.⁷⁰

S. L. Mbewe admits to changing his approach to sermon preparation in the face of the demands of pastoral concerns. Whereas he used to start with historical critical exposition, he now starts with the spiritual needs of the people and then asks God to lead him to appropriate texts.⁷¹

However, the preachers do not wish to make the congregation's circumstances a priority at the expense of the biblical texts. In addition, the role of an immanent God in the processes of preparing and delivering His messages must be made clear.

In the sections following, we will show how the respondents attempt to resolve this problematic. First, we address the immanence of God in the sermon preparation and delivery processes. Second, we discuss the substance of the respondents' hermeneutics under 'Extending Scripture.' Thereafter, we discuss how the respondents understand their hermeneutics in relation to their cultural circumstances under 'A Multitude of Witnesses' and 'Incarnating Scripture.' Finally, we discuss the mark of legitimate interpretations under 'Divine Effect.'

B.1. Immanence in Biblical interpretation

Above we discussed immanence as part of the epistemological and theological pre-understanding from which the respondents interpret the texts. Below, we discuss immanence as the respondents understand God's involvement in the processes of sermon preparation and delivery.

⁷⁰ Mujumira, p. 10.

⁷¹ Mbewe, "Excursus XXI," p. 17-18.

B.1.a. Immanence of God and the process of preparing a sermon

Many respondents distinguish between preparing and delivering a homily under the tutelage of God and doing so outwith this control. That both scenarios are possible suggests that preparing and delivering sermons under God is not automatic but is a goal towards which every preacher should aspire. It also suggests that divine immanence does not arbitrarily impose itself on the preacher. They also distinguish between God's involvement during the process of preparing a sermon and an in-breaking during the sermon.

Nkhonjera regards the preacher as essentially a spiritual visionary with the ability to hear the voice of God just like the prophets of old.⁷² Not having a vision as a preacher "simply means you are blind and the blind can't be [leading] the blind."⁷³ Revelation from God (which he calls the Rhema)⁷⁴ includes discerning the spiritual needs of the people, the message, text(s) and the exegetical correlation between text(s) and message.⁷⁵ The Rhema is essentially a hermeneutic that makes text(s) the Word of God to a given congregation.

Kakoma also hears from God concerning the spiritual needs of the people, appropriate message and text(s).⁷⁶ Further, he acknowledges the possibility of God's in-breaking, what he terms 'divine immediacy.'⁷⁷ As with Nkhonjera above, the Spirit of God is the exegete who makes the Scriptures relevant to the congregation.⁷⁸

To S. L. Mbewe, the Spirit of God is the interpreter of Scripture, 'the one who gives revelations', particularly revelations as spiritual food. Limiting meanings of Scripture to historical critical ones is limiting Scripture itself since the audiences and circumstances of subsequent appropriators of the Scriptures can never be exactly those in the Scriptures.⁷⁹ The Spirit's work of imparting revelation to a preacher is

⁷² Nkhonjera, p. 7.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 12-13.

⁷⁴ Where the Rhema is "God speaking." Ibid., p. 13.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 1, 7-8, 13.

⁷⁶ Kakoma, p. 1.

⁷⁷ For instance, in his message, the Spirit of God overtook him and led him to preach on the love of the Father. His lack of prior knowledge was such that he had to seek the congregation's assistance to locate the text that the Spirit of God wanted him to use. Ibid., p. 1, 9. Cf. Chikamata, p. 16.

⁷⁸ Kakoma, p. 10, 15-16.

⁷⁹ S. L. Mbewe, "Excursus VII: 'The Life of Liberty.' A Homily Delivered at Channel of Blessings Apostolic Church, 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 18-20, Katete, Zambia.

part of a broader imperative for the Christian to walk together with God (in contrast to self-determination).⁸⁰

His idea of preaching the Word of God is preaching from the biblical texts according to the hermeneutic supplied by the revealing activity of the Holy Spirit.⁸¹ This hermeneutic may entail different interpretations for different times and circumstances from the same texts.⁸²

Chikamata also goes to God for a message for the people and considers their spiritual needs to be the starting point of relevant biblical interpretation.⁸³ He also expects that at times God may interrupt this process with an immediate message.⁸⁴

However, his understanding of the relationship between the Scriptures and derivation of meaning under divine tutelage is rather vague. On one hand, the meanings of Scripture ought to be those arising from historical critical exegesis. Therefore, understanding the Scriptures in their historical critical sense is part of basic preparedness. When God gives the preacher a message, this reservoir of knowledge will direct the preacher to the appropriate texts.⁸⁵ He fears that without the safeguard of historical critical meanings, contemporary messages may lose their footing in the Scriptures.⁸⁶

On the other hand, it is the message as given by the Spirit of God that embodies the hermeneutic that makes texts relevant to the audience. For example, he interprets a text where Paul affirms the commonwealth of all believers in Christ through faith⁸⁷ to counter the local feeling that the Assemblies of God congregation did not belong in Nyanje, an area dominated by the Reformed Church in Zambia for over a hundred years.⁸⁸

⁸⁰ Mbewe, "Excursus XXI," p. 5-6.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 19.

⁸² Mbewe, "Excursus VII," p. 19.

⁸³ Chikamata, p. 16.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 17. He recalls an instance when he had to shelve his carefully prepared sermon to accommodate an immediate message from God.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 16.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 15.

⁸⁷ Eph 2:19-22.

⁸⁸ Chikamata, p. 9-11.

Quite clearly, historical critical meanings do not necessarily form the substance of the spiritual food for people in other contexts. However, he argues that relevance by its very nature precludes strict adherence to historical critical meanings.⁸⁹

For Millar Phiri, exegetical failure is at once a consequence of his failure to observe carefully the historical critical meanings of the texts he used and a consequence of not having time to pray that the Holy Spirit would actually show him the texts' meanings.⁹⁰ Thus, ideally his exegetical discipline inseparably co-operates with divine immanence. In his opening prayer, he appeals to God communicate what He has prepared for them (including the preacher) for that day⁹¹ implying that God was the architect of the sermon.

Khetson Mbewe bathes the entire process of preparing a homily in prayer. He prays for divine guidance for an appropriate message, writes down the message with all the biblical texts and their interpretations and prays over the homily in case God may still want to replace it with a fresh message during delivery.⁹²

B.1.b. Immanence of God and sermon delivery

In the context of sermon delivery, divine immanence refers to the influence of the Spirit of God on the preacher and the hearers during the sermon event. It is more appropriate to view the sermon as event because at some level, the preacher and audience are recipients of the ministry of God.

Above, we discussed immanence in relation to extrapolation of meanings from texts. The nature of these extrapolations is the subject of the section "Extending Scripture" below. From a homiletical point of view, the preacher is a bearer of God's message.⁹³

For S. L. Mbewe, the Holy Spirit remains present and consultable during sermon delivery:

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 15-16.

⁹⁰ Millar Phiri, "Excursus XIV: 'Mau Anga Sadzagwa Pacabe.' A Homily Delivered at Baptist Evangelical Church, Sinda, 10 August 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 7-8, Sinda, Zambia.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 1.

⁹² Mbewe, "Excursus XV," p. 11. Cf. Sakala, p. 15.

⁹³ Literally, God's "sound box." Phiri, "Excursus XII," p. 1.

Whenever I am preaching...sometimes if at all you have observed...you can see maybe, just a minute or second...*cioneka monga naibala vimene nika?...Nikamba* (it appears as though I have forgotten what I am saying), but I like just to...just to [interviewer: “consult?”] Yeah, my God.⁹⁴

Sometimes this entails skipping painstakingly prepared material in order to accommodate what the Spirit may be saying.⁹⁵ It is critical for the preacher to have a sense of the presence and input of God throughout the preaching process because this is what leads to fresh ways of seeing things.

This does not conflict with the inspiration of the Scriptures because the Spirit of God is the interpreter of Scripture helping reveal what is written. Excluding His input is excluding the hermeneutic supplied by the author Spirit and relying on one's own powers of comprehension to understand the inspired Scriptures.⁹⁶ Likewise, Mackwell Nyirenda admits to receiving unplanned hermeneutical revelations, including Scriptures to cite, from God while preaching.⁹⁷

In his opening prayer, Boyd Makukula depicts sermon delivery as an event in the context of spiritual conflict. He prays to God for assistance to counteract the efforts of hostile spirits that are present and seek to influence the reception of the message. The reception of the message is attained through revelation and misrepresentation of the Word in the hearer is an act of the enemy.⁹⁸ This is consistent with his understanding that God, Satan, and their respective hosts are present in the world and constantly engaged in a war for the soul of humanity.

He extends the notion that spiritual authorities have minds of their own to Satan. Further, Satan and his host (seducing spirits) are able to superimpose their mind over human minds. Therefore, people under the authority and influence of Satan can scarcely understand why they think and do certain things because their thoughts originate from spirits.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Mbewe, “Excursus XXI,” p. 22.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 21-23.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 22-23.

⁹⁷ Mackwell Nyirenda, “Excursus XXIII: ‘Kuyandikira Pafupi ndi Mulungu.’ Homily Delivered at Apostolic Faith Mission Church, Petauke, 21 September 2003,” Sermon and Interview, p. 14, Petauke, Zambia.

⁹⁸ Makukula, p. 1.

⁹⁹ Makukula, p. 20.

Dickson Banda assumes that God is present with the hearers to supplement his flawed communication. God “whisper[s] in their hearts” during or even after the service exactly what the preacher was trying to say.¹⁰⁰

For J. Kakoma, the preacher’s hearing stance extends to sermon delivery. On this score, the preacher ought to be ready to receive and deliver an immediate message if so prompted by the Spirit of God while preaching.¹⁰¹

He sees a distinction between the human mind (and its rational processes) and the mind of the Spirit which is mediated to human consciousness through revelation. The role of the preacher is to access the mind of the Spirit of God for the congregation.¹⁰²

Nkhonjera prays that God will not only communicate through him but will also thwart the efforts of any foreign spirits¹⁰³ that would hinder the understanding of His Word by the people.¹⁰⁴ This suggests that preaching is in the context of spiritual conflict between God and the forces of evil and comprehension follows spiritual victory by God.

Further, the congregation is essentially a group of people led and taught by the Spirit of God. Thus, the collective consensus of the congregation should reflect the counsels of God. In this larger picture, the sermon is an injection of fresh divine counsel for the guidance and spiritual growth of the people of God.

Below, we examine the specific ways in which meanings are ascribed to texts of Scripture and the respondents’ rationale behind such ascriptions.

B.2. Extending Scripture

Preachers of the Old Apostolic Church supposedly possess an innate ability to understand the spiritual meanings of Scripture that precludes any discussion of the

¹⁰⁰ Dickson Banda, “Excursus XVIII: Untitled Homily Delivered at Reformed Church of Zambia, Katete Stores Congregation, 24 August 2003,” Sermon and Interview, p. 13, Katete, Zambia.

¹⁰¹ Kakoma, p. 8-9.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁰³ The devil and his demons are clearly in mind here.

¹⁰⁴ Nkhonjera, p. 1. Cf. Makukula above.

immediate involvement of God in sermon preparation and delivery. For example, we should not understand the alabaster jar of perfume in Luke 7:36-39 literally as it represents the sins that the woman brought to Jesus for forgiveness. The point of that text is that all should bring their sins to Jesus for forgiveness.¹⁰⁵ Elsewhere, Moses as shepherd of Jethro's flocks (Exod 3) really means he was a minister of God. The fact that he was shepherding these flocks in the wilderness indicates the spiritual poverty of the churches he was ministering among, those directly descended from the 60 disciples who could not endure Jesus' teaching.¹⁰⁶

Their foundational narrative¹⁰⁷ is the only justification necessary for their hermeneutic. The initiated instinctively understand the spiritual meanings of texts. Moreover, spiritual expositions are self-evident apparently not because of their substance but because of their propensity to depart from the historical critical meanings of biblical texts and their brevity when compared to the expositions of the uninitiated.¹⁰⁸

Tembo seeks to engage historical critical meanings in his exegesis. Therefore, his use of 1 Cor 9:24-27 includes a clear exposition of Paul's use of the analogy of sports to talk about spiritual discipline, for the ultimate goal of preaching is to communicate the Word of God without distortions.¹⁰⁹ However, this exactitude really refers to the preacher's understanding, itself the result of a combination of efforts towards historical critical understanding and 'wisdom' from God.¹¹⁰ Ultimately, in preaching, the preacher is essentially passing on his or her own understanding.¹¹¹

It is in communicating that Tembo socio-culturally 'extends' Scripture. He argues that people understand best when they are familiar with the illustrations used.¹¹² Mere historical critical exposition may safeguard textual meanings but it will most

¹⁰⁵ Phiri, "Excursus XII," p. 2-5, 14-15.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁰⁷ Pp. 84-85.

¹⁰⁸ Phiri, "Excursus XII," p. 23, 28-29.

¹⁰⁹ M. Mang'ombe Tembo, "Excursus VI: 'The Race of Faith.' A Homily Delivered at Bible Gospel Church of Central Africa (BIGOCA), Katete Congregation, 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 1-2, 13, Katete, Zambia.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 15.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 13.

certainly compromise comprehension. The point is not to give the congregation lessons in history but to communicate what the Scriptures through their historical illustrations, were trying to communicate to their hearers.¹¹³

Therefore, in appropriating 1Cor 9:24-27, he deliberately uses trophies from the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup, in place of the text's crown that withers (therefore, from a plant), because "they wouldn't relate to it because they have never seen it."¹¹⁴ The competitions and disciplines he describes are those of his experience as Sports Teacher at Katete High School, not the Pan-Hellenic games familiar to the Corinthians.¹¹⁵ "Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things"¹¹⁶ becomes the specific disciplines of training that his charges undergo prior to competitions.¹¹⁷

His idea of preaching the Word of God seems to be a basic re-telling of the biblical texts using contemporary concepts and language. There is no sense that in the re-telling he has the liberty to nuance the biblical texts in ways that cannot be supported by strict historical critical analysis or at least by his best efforts at conducting such analysis. Here, 'extending Scripture' means 'reviving the meanings of Scripture.' Therefore, the Scriptures are spiritual food to the contemporary believer as far as the pastoral and spiritual needs of the contemporary believer somehow resonate with those of the audiences in the Bible as appropriated through historical critical exegesis.

His decision to regard competitions as analogous to the Christian's spiritual experience has been replicated by other interpreters of this text.¹¹⁸ However, one could argue that by using his contemporary sports scene as the starting point of his exposition of this text, he has not honoured its historical critical meanings. It is almost as if the sports of his time and day have replaced those in the texts in aid of comprehension for his hearers.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 14-15.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 12.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Keener, 472.

¹¹⁶ 1 Cor 9:25.

¹¹⁷ Tembo, p. 2.

¹¹⁸ E.g. F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 62.

David Mujumira feels that in a congregational setting, the notion that one can study the Scriptures apart from pastoral considerations is fallacious. Such a person risks being theoretical and thereby failing to address the pastoral and spiritual needs of the people. The interests of relevance and impact of message demand that the exegete fully engage the context *when* interpreting the biblical texts.

To him, the context of the hearer is an integral part of relevant exegesis and the missionaries who brought the Gospel to Africa¹¹⁹ made a fatal error in disregarding the whole context of the African as pagan and quite unhelpful towards the conversion of the African.¹²⁰ This appears to be as much a question of ‘seeing’ as it is of ‘making relevant.’

It is not clear that when Mujumira argues for the priority of context in exegesis he is doing so from an understanding that pure exegesis is impossible because, in keeping with postmodern criticism, nobody reads from an epistemologically objective stance. His argument appears to be that doing biblical exegesis just for the sake of it, with no eye towards how a particular context influences appropriation and how the text addresses a people’s circumstances robs Scripture of meaning, relevance and impact and is useless in a pastoral situation. He has not indicated how this exegesis bridges the lacuna between the historical critical meanings of texts and exegesis *through* the eyes of the context of the preacher.

Nkhonjera resolves the tension between historical critical meanings of texts (Logos) and the Word of God imparted afresh by God (Rhema) in the agency of the Holy Spirit. The ‘Rhema’ precedes the ‘Logos’ in sermon preparation in that God’s revelations to the preacher determine use of Scripture. In this way, relevance is immediate and foremost.

However, the Spirit of God does not ‘speak’ contrary to Scripture, ‘His Word’.¹²¹ This means that the ‘Rhema’ and the ‘Logos’ agree. The ‘Rhema’ may be a direct interpretation of the ‘Logos’.¹²² Most often, it is a message, nonetheless based on the

¹¹⁹ Cf. Kakoma, p. 11.

¹²⁰ Mujumira, p. 11-12.

¹²¹ Nkhonjera, p. 13.

¹²² Ibid.

Scriptures, that addresses a specific spiritual matter.¹²³ The ‘Rhema’ is ‘extension’ of Scripture in that it transforms the biblical texts into spiritual food for the moment.

Mere exposition of the ‘Logos’ is the equivalent of preaching without a vision from God, without divine involvement and leadership. It is essentially the blind leading the blind.¹²⁴

Nkhonjera seems to emphasize the role of the Spirit of God in hermeneutics at the expense of historical critical study although he concedes the role of the ‘Logos’ as validating the ‘Rhema.’ Clearly, his encounters with Scripture in the context of sermon preparation are in response to the leading of the Spirit of God. This is consistent with his stance that Scripture can only be relevant to contemporary believers if it is ‘Rhema.’¹²⁵ However, it is not clear whether in referring to the Scriptures, he means their historical critical meanings. Neither is it clear that he sees the historical critical study of the Scriptures as valuable in itself.

Charlton Phiri resolves the tension between historical critical meanings and relevance by adopting a hermeneutic of empathy. This is a step further than Palula’s hermeneutic of reflection that entailed learning negatives and positives from the spiritual experiences of biblical characters. A hermeneutic of empathy involves re-enacting the spiritual experiences in the biblical texts by *entering* the spiritual experiences of the biblical characters in a process by which the reader’s faith experiences illumine those of biblical characters. For example, his *modus operandi* for interpreting Gen 22:1-8 is to ask, “How could I have been feeling it that all the way I am going, it’s just to go and kill this person?”¹²⁶

This hermeneutic requires very close reading of texts because every detail is important in this re-enactment. It often yields ‘insight’ into the thoughts of the biblical characters that may not be explicitly stated in the text. For instance, Abraham was apparently deliberately vague to the servants when he asked them to wait for him and Isaac as they went to “worship”¹²⁷ on mount Moriah because he feared that

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ He goes on to argue that mere historical critical exposition of Scripture does not necessarily engender spiritual comprehension. Rather, it can become a weapon for error or even unbelief in the hands of non-believers. Ibid., p. 13, 15.

¹²⁶ Phiri, “Excursus XX,” p. 9.

¹²⁷ Gen 22:5.

these undiscerning souls¹²⁸ would object to offering Isaac as a burnt offering to God and thus derail his obedience to God.¹²⁹

Like Palula, he also reflects on Abraham's experience from the premise that the nature and challenges of worshipping God are the same for the people of God.¹³⁰ Consequently, the spiritual experiences of biblical characters are invaluable lessons to subsequent worshippers of God.

'Extending Scripture' here means several issues related to historical critical understanding of the biblical texts. It means 'seeing' the fuller accounts of the historical and spiritual dynamics encapsulated in the texts, essentially filling in details through a process of discernment.¹³¹

The entry point into this empathy is the biblical record itself, hence the necessity for very close reading. However, Phiri's faith experience is part of his hermeneutical tools when reading the narrative account of Abraham.¹³²

Kakoma also reads the text very closely using his own faith experience as an instrument for discerning the spiritual dynamics in the texts. He too 'sees' thought processes in the texts that the texts themselves do not explicitly state. For example, the older son is the real prodigal¹³³ in that he never quite knew or 'felt' the warmth of his father's love.¹³⁴ In contrast, the younger son was so aware of this love that it brought him back to his father when he came to his senses.¹³⁵

This interpretation is a direct consequence of the revealing work of the Holy Spirit towards transforming the biblical texts into spiritual food. Therefore, at once the

¹²⁸ According to him, the facts that they were left with the donkeys and that donkeys are commonly associated with foolishness suggest the undiscerning character of the servants. Phiri, "Excursus XX," p. 5.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 2.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 13-14.

¹³¹ For a fuller discussion of the perception that the written texts are inherently abbreviated and ideological and the place of discernment, see Mugambi, "Africa and the Old Testament," 12.

¹³² Phiri, "Excursus XX," p. 9.

¹³³ Kakoma seems to use the word 'prodigal' to mean disconnected from his heritage in his father's house and therefore representative of a Christian who is a stranger in God's household.

¹³⁴ Kakoma, p. 2, 6.

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 2.

equivalent of historical critical exegesis and a pneumatic hermeneutic makes the texts the Word of God for contemporary hearers.¹³⁶

He defends these ‘additions’ by arguing that the Scriptures were never intended to be exhaustive. A pneumatic hermeneutic, therefore, helps the preacher to move into further detail in specific texts. However, this is not detail in violation of the texts.¹³⁷ It is detail in aid of comprehension. Therefore, where Charlton Phiri saw his spiritual experience as a tool for reading the texts, Kakoma sees the revealing work of the Spirit of God. Further, eisegesis¹³⁸ is never prevented by exclusive adherence to historical critical exegesis (which is mere rationalism and robs Scripture of spiritual relevance)¹³⁹ but by trust in the revealing work of the Holy Spirit.

Comparing these expanded expositions of Scripture with Scripture easily rectifies unfortunate failures in communication between God and instrument. This is the role of Scripture as judge because Scripture and the Holy Spirit agree.¹⁴⁰

Kakoma places the ministry of the Holy Spirit at the centre of biblical interpretation as opposed to some canons of historical critical exegesis. The interpreter interprets from a position of dependence on the Spirit of God as opposed to dependence on his or her own critical abilities.¹⁴¹ Historical critical analysis is attempted within this framework with an understanding that the Spirit guides the interpreter’s efforts.¹⁴²

In spite of S. L. Mbewe’s shift from starting sermon preparation from purely expository concerns to the perceived spiritual needs of the congregation,¹⁴³ his sermons continue to be generally close commentary on biblical texts¹⁴⁴ with a view that the spiritual dynamics in the texts will become, by their very exposition, spiritual

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 10-11.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 14.

¹³⁸ Introducing foreign meanings into the Scriptures.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 20-21.

¹⁴⁰ Kakoma, p. 18. He argues that for this reason a preacher should not be a novice but someone who is steeped in the Scriptures so that he or she can bring the testimony of the Scriptures to bear on any interpretation.

¹⁴¹ In this regard, he opposes the notion that rational thought alone is adequate for understanding the biblical texts. Ibid.

¹⁴² This guidance may include giving specific texts and how they are to be used at any given instance. This is revelation as in understanding the mind of God concerning a specific matter. Ibid., p. 9, 17.

¹⁴³ Cf. p. 92.

¹⁴⁴ E.g. Mbewe, “Excursus VII,” p. 9-10 and “Excursus XXI,” p. 3, 14-16.

lessons for the hearers. Like Charlton Phiri and Kakoma above, this is the way to enter the spiritual experiences of the biblical characters. Failure to allow such priority for the biblical texts is to preach out of one's own mind.¹⁴⁵

The people of God in the Bible may be continuous with his congregation, but the biblical texts are occasional in that they addressed specific people on issues that may not concern his congregation.¹⁴⁶ This necessitates re-appropriations for people and situations that need not be exact replicas of those in the texts.

For example, a felt need to counter the efforts of religious groups that were proselytising from his flock led him to use Paul's challenge to the Galatian church against regression to Judaistic traditions and the Law¹⁴⁷ to address his audience's need to do Christian works freely, without coercion. 'Freedom' here means 'lack of coercion'.¹⁴⁸

Elsewhere, a felt need to address the self-centredness of some members of the congregation led him to interpret the parable of the prodigal son¹⁴⁹ as an allegory where the father is a type of God, the older son a type of the self-centred Christian and the younger son a type of an unbeliever.¹⁵⁰ He 'exposes' the vices of the elder son thoroughly through very close reading of the text.¹⁵¹ God uses the waywardness of the younger son and the mercy and generosity of the father to expose the self-centred vices of the seemingly obedient child.¹⁵² These include desire for reward and praise, pandering to the gallery, seeing God as too demanding, not appreciating the correction of others, being right in one's own eyes, self-pity, desire to be coaxed and pride.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁵ Mbewe, "Excursus XXI," p. 17. Moses Kunda, one from his flock and in attendance during this interview called this "using their brain" to come up with what to say, (26) by which he meant human reflection out with the interpreting activity of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁴⁶ Mbewe, "Excursus VII," p. 18.

¹⁴⁷ Gal 1:6, 8; 3:1, 6-9, 23-4:7; 6:1-5, 11.

¹⁴⁸ Mbewe, "Excursus VII, p. 5.

¹⁴⁹ Luke 15:25-32.

¹⁵⁰ Mbewe, "Excursus XXI," p. 18.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 3-6, 8-13.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 8-11.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 6-11.

This is a curious way of extending Scripture in that, at one level, spiritual need shapes textual meaning. The operation of a hermeneutic of empathy is evident in his liberty to explore the thought processes of the characters in the text: "I really wanted to know the heart or the actions of...the elder brother."¹⁵⁴

Justification for such exposition is that both scenarios (the Galatians and Mbewe's congregation) are concerned with Christian freedom. To demand that only those who are struggling with regression to the Law and Judaistic traditions may appropriate Galatians limits Scripture and renders this book irrelevant to scenarios where circumcision issues do not exist.¹⁵⁵ It also overlooks the activity of the Holy Spirit in giving revelation in the process of close reading of biblical texts.¹⁵⁶

At another level, textual meaning is supposed to be circumscribed by the biblical text. Therefore, the discussion of the self-centred life directly arises out of a careful exposition of the circumstances and reaction of the elder son in Luke 15: 25-32. In this vein, supporting texts must also be read carefully to ensure that their support both arises naturally from the texts and genuinely supports the main text. Those who make light of such close reading risk overlooking large portions of the substance of texts and preaching their thoughts as opposed to the Word of God.¹⁵⁷

Chikamata concedes that the grounds for exclusion and inclusion in Ephesians 2 are not those of his message in Nyanje. However, he considers the concept of 'alien' to be common to both contexts.¹⁵⁸ Likewise, the way he uses the metaphor of Christ as 'cornerstone' is different from the way it is used in the text.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, he argues that addressing the issues of the contemporary Christian is the goal of hermeneutics and 'what happened' serves this end. Its value is in ensuring that the concepts applied to the contemporary situations are those arising from historical

¹⁵⁴ Mbewe, "Excursus XXI," p. 20.

¹⁵⁵ Mbewe, "Excursus VII," p. 18.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁵⁷ Mbewe, "Excursus XXI," p. 16.

¹⁵⁸ In Ephesians 2, the Christians are included in the commonwealth of Israel through faith in Christ. In Nyanje, the young congregation is included in the mission field of Nyanje because of the commissioning of Christ to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Chikamata, p. 10-11.

¹⁵⁹ He uses the metaphor to encourage the congregants at Nyanje to participate fully in building this work, as 'the efforts of every member' are building blocks to the entire edifice, the mission of evangelising Nyanje. In Eph 2, it is the believers who are 'living stones' and Christ is the cornerstone of God's temple. Ibid., p. 12.

critical readings of the Bible.¹⁶⁰ 'Making texts address the needs of contemporary situations' then includes an allegorizing hermeneutic that may not correspond with historical critical meanings.

For Mackwell Nyirenda, the Spirit of God gives the text and interprets it, including in the event of preaching. For example, as he was reading, Exod 3:5 "touched" him deeply. He spent about three days contemplating the question "what sort of 'turning aside to look',¹⁶¹ is this?"¹⁶² His findings led him to preach the sermon he entitled 'Approaching God.'¹⁶³

In the end, the 'turning aside' of Moses to see the spectacle of a bush burning without being consumed was not from mere curiosity but a spiritual turning to God on par with Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus.¹⁶⁴ 'Removing sandals' means 'repenting'.¹⁶⁵ 'Fire' symbolised the Holy Spirit and spoke of His coming on Pentecost to empower believers for good works and supernatural works.¹⁶⁶ He contends that his interpretation not be dismissed for not conforming to the text's historical critical meaning because a text of Scripture does not have one meaning but many.¹⁶⁷

B.3. Multitude of Witnesses

In this section, we explore the practice of amassing textual witnesses in support of teachings derived from key texts. Technically, the intention is to vindicate

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁶¹ Exod 3:5. NASB.

¹⁶² Nyirenda, "Excursus XXIII," p. 15.

¹⁶³ "*Kuyandikira Pafupi ndi Mulungu.*"

¹⁶⁴ Nyirenda, "Excursus XXIII," p. 3-4, 8, 13. Cf. Acts 9.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 4. Before arriving at this conclusion, he tried to research the historical significance of removing sandals before a deity but lacked the material to do so. His 'theological imagination' told him that it had to be repenting of sins because that is the only thing that is unacceptable in God's holy presence. Nyirenda, "Excursus XXIII," p. 15-16.

¹⁶⁶ Nyirenda, "Excursus XXIII," p. 7.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Rev. Peard Muzoka (in attendance) who sees the bush as a type of Moses and the fire of God's supernatural activity. However, he concedes that a single verse need not have just one interpretation. Ibid., p. 20-22.

interpretations by demonstrating broad biblical support for them. This intention partly stems from the theological presupposition that Scripture “coheres in its testimony to a common message.”¹⁶⁸ Therefore, any authentic interpretation of a part of Scripture will find theological support, even re-statement, elsewhere in Scripture.

‘Multitude of Witnesses’ is technically a continuation of ‘Extending Scripture’ in that it is intra-biblical validation of meanings through perceived interpretations of other texts. However, we treat it separately because it touches on a facet of the respondents’ epistemological framework that is intimately related and, we will argue in the next chapter, influenced by their socio-cultural realities.

Sakala prefers expository preaching to topical¹⁶⁹ sermons because the latter engender laxity in attending to the historical critical meanings of the texts used to support teachings.¹⁷⁰ However, he feels compelled to cite “other witnesses”¹⁷¹ to support his teaching because of the challenge posed by Jehovah’s Witnesses in the area who characteristically cite several biblical texts to demonstrate the validity of their doctrines. This has led to demands for extended biblical ‘witnesses’ among inquirers.¹⁷²

He also admits that piling up witnesses to validate a position is a cultural characteristic of the Chewa, the ethnic group of the area, particularly in royal court jurisprudence. In addition, he sees the same practice in “biblical culture”.¹⁷³

In his close reading of Galatians, S. L. Mbewe sees multiplication of witnesses manifested at two levels. First, he sees it in Paul’s allusion to the length of his letter in Gal 6:11.¹⁷⁴ The size of the letter coupled with the fact that he wrote it in his own hand enhances the “force” of the letter.¹⁷⁵ Size apparently directly relates to

¹⁶⁸ Cf. the epistemological and theological starting points, A.2.

¹⁶⁹ I.e. thematic.

¹⁷⁰ Sakala, p. 15.

¹⁷¹ “*Mboni zina*.” Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁷² Sakala, p. 17.

¹⁷³ Sakala, p. 17.

¹⁷⁴ Mbewe, “Excursus VII,” p. 1. He is obviously reading the KJV which has “Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you” for Greek “Ἰδετε πηλικοῖς ὑμῖν γράμμασιν ἔγραψα” where the NKJ has “See with what large letters I have written.” Virtually no other modern English translation follows the KJV in seeing this as a reference to size of the letter.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 12.

comprehension: “If he wrote it in a short way, again it seems that...they were not able to grasp the truth which he wanted.”¹⁷⁶

Second, he sees Paul’s use of many illustrations to argue that faith has priority over observance of the Law as adding weight to his teaching. For example, he recalls how they received the Holy Spirit¹⁷⁷ and work miracles,¹⁷⁸ and gives his exposition of the justification of Abraham before God¹⁷⁹ and of sundry texts on the matter of faith and Law.¹⁸⁰ He draws theological parallels between the Law and the covenant on one hand, and Hagar and Sarah on the other.¹⁸¹

Such abundance of evidence has the effect of demonstrating that his teaching is widely supported in Scripture and thus valid. Mbewe recalls this logic in the pedagogy practiced by his parents. They marshalled together several illustrations, instances that validated their instructions.¹⁸²

Chisenga’s pre-understanding that the Scriptures embody one message that is repeated in it¹⁸³ leads him to cite liberally when he is doing an exposition of a text. He admits that his theological college teachers taught him to allow “the Scripture to interpret itself”.¹⁸⁴ However, he also recognizes that using several illustrations is part of his culture with the rationale that multiplying illustrations facilitates comprehension particularly because the illustrations (“stories”) are familiar and easy to understand.¹⁸⁵ For these reasons, he does not approve of biblical expositions that do not stand on broad cross-referencing for “you need several bricks” to build a house.¹⁸⁶

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁷⁷ Gal 3:2.

¹⁷⁸ Gal 3:5.

¹⁷⁹ Gal 3:6-10. Cf. Gen 12:3; 15:6.

¹⁸⁰ Gal 3:10-16. Cf. Deut 27:26; Hab 2:4; Lev 18:5; Deut 21:23; and Gen 12:7; 13:15; 17:7; 24:7.

¹⁸¹ Gal 3:15-29; 4:21-31.

¹⁸² Mbewe, “Excursus VII,” p. 13.

¹⁸³ Chisenga, “Excursus II,” p. 8.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 8. Cf. p. 9.

¹⁸⁵ Chisenga, “Excursus II,” p. 9.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 8-9.

For Mujumira, citing texts gives “God’s authority” to what the preacher is saying.¹⁸⁷ The caution when citing supporting texts is that they should “resonate with the point you are making,” not “necessarily that you went there...and did exegesis, and then the point emerged.”¹⁸⁸ This is deliberate departure from his theological training in order to address the practical challenges of meeting people’s spiritual needs as opposed to being “theoretical”.¹⁸⁹

B.4. “Incarnating” Scripture

This section signals a departure from ‘Extending Scripture’ in that we discuss how the respondents interpret the Bible *through* their African epistemological framework and socio-cultural realities. It stems from similarities between “the African religious heritage and the way of life which the OT presupposes and takes for granted”.¹⁹⁰

Chisenga sees this ‘imposition’ as the essence of relevant hermeneutics for any society. For example, in his exposition of Ps 103:1-10, he interprets ‘praise’ using local cultural expressions, how Zambian people show appreciation to kings, village headmen, parents or even gods where “praise is never passive or silent” but “manifests in an audible sort of action such as singing...dance...even raising hands”.¹⁹¹

The difference between praising God and human authorities is one of degree, in keeping with the superior stature of God, rather than differences in expression.¹⁹² Such praise is outwardly expressive because it is both for God’s benefit (who sees in secret) and is a testimony to the human observer.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁷ Mujumira, p. 14-15.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 15

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Mugambi, “Africa and the Old Testament,” 7.

¹⁹¹ Chisenga, “Excursus II,” p. 10.

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 11-12.

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 11.

Kakoma admits that his emphasis on the ministry of the Holy Spirit in interpretation could be a consequence of seeing the texts through his African worldview.¹⁹⁴

However, he argues that similarity of worldviews between Africans and the Bible should not be perceived as compromising biblical hermeneutics. Rather, it ought to be exploited as an epistemological starting point for African biblical hermeneutics.¹⁹⁵

S. L. Mbewe sees Paul's allusion to the fact he wrote the letter by his own hand as indicative of his immense concern and that had the effect of underlining the importance of its contents.¹⁹⁶ This conclusion arises from the projection from local practice to the biblical texts of the significance of an authority figure personally undertaking a task that may be assigned to somebody else.

Yesaya Banda reads biblical texts through his context, indiscriminately assigning contextual meanings to texts. This appears to be a consequence of the 'familiarity' of the socio-cultural realities in the text. For instance, the Chewa of Katete, Banda's tribe, keeps free-range pigs for food and economic profit. This leads him to interpret Mark 5:1-17 through the eyes of a Chewa pig- owner.¹⁹⁷

Therefore, the people are 'furious' with Jesus for allowing evil spirits to enter their pigs and cause them to drown in the lake. Consequently, they refuse him entry into their village in spite of his good work in healing the demon-possessed man.¹⁹⁸ The lesson of the text is that the Christian should not exclude Jesus from his or her life because of material wealth.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Dickson, *Uncompleted Mission*, 84; *Theology in Africa*, 152-159; and Mugambi, "Africa and the Old Testament," 7-10.

¹⁹⁵ Kakoma, p. 20-21.

¹⁹⁶ Mbewe, "Excursus VII," p. 11-12.

¹⁹⁷ Therefore, he postulates that in permitting their pigs to drown Jesus had robbed the inhabitants of Gerasenes the economic means for educating their children, cultivating their crops, and looking after visitors, all very common uses of pigs among the Chewa. Yesaya Banda, "Excursus XXII: 'Yesu Ndiye Sing'anga Wam'kulu.' Homily Delivered at Katete Boma RCZ Church, 7 September 2003," Sermon and Interview, p. 2-3, Katete, Zambia.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2, 5.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10-12.

He is quite aware that he is reading this text through his experiences and apparently sees nothing wrong with doing so.²⁰⁰ The people on the road to Emmaus²⁰¹ and the Samaritans²⁰² are examples of those who do not exclude Jesus from their lives.²⁰³

Banda appears to interpret the Bible through the eyes of his context not because he has carefully reflected on his hermeneutic but because he operates from a naïve premise that his historical-social world is the legitimate lens from which to interpret Scripture.²⁰⁴

For Mang'ombe Tembo, 'Incarnating Scripture' is based on the need to be contextually relevant in order to facilitate comprehension. The primacy of comprehension demands that contextually familiar realities *replace* historical critical ones as the vehicles for communicating the meanings of Scripture.²⁰⁵ For instance, he replaces "a perishable wreath"²⁰⁶ with a forged-metal trophy whose limited value lies in the fact that it is worthless in death. Its 'perishable nature' lies in the fact that it 'becomes worthless' after one's death as opposed to the crown from Christ whose value will never diminish.²⁰⁷ However, even his interpretation seems to be guided by his epistemology. For example, 'works'²⁰⁸ can never be faith that is detached from works.²⁰⁹

Boyd Makukula imports his pneumatology into his interpretation of "deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons"²¹⁰ without apology. He even celebrates the fact that

²⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 7-8.

²⁰¹ Luke 24:9.

²⁰² John 4:40.

²⁰³ Banda, "Excursus XXII," p. 2-3.

²⁰⁴ His only allusion to the historical meaning of the text is when he observes that in biblical times pigs had shepherds just like cattle. Nevertheless, even here the profile of a shepherd is from his context. They are hirelings and their reaction to the drowning of the pigs is panic at the thought of what their masters would say, to whom they rush with the horrible news. Ibid., p. 2.

²⁰⁵ Tembo, p. 12-13.

²⁰⁶ 1 Cor 9:25.

²⁰⁷ Tembo, p. 6.

²⁰⁸ This defined as "What does God want of us?" or 'Doing works that are appropriate'. Ibid., p. 17.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 21.

²¹⁰ 1 Tim 4:1.

Africans “understand more of the spiritual realm” [than Westerners] and do not need to study literature on the subject.²¹¹

For Dickson Banda, the biblical texts are familiar epistemological territory both in terms of level of sophistication and the forms of communication used.²¹² This familiarity apparently also applies to his audience. For example, he does not need to explain James’ figurative use of the tongue to his audience because they make the connection immediately from their acumen for figurative expression.²¹³

He accuses theologians of undermining people’s ability to understand Scripture and complicating it through “difficult theories”, “historical background” and the like. Scholars ‘take axes and hack the people’ for the Scriptures were written for “ordinary people”.²¹⁴

Millar Phiri’s hermeneutic does not easily lend itself to categorization. At one level, it is ‘Extending Scripture’ because his message is based on specific texts.²¹⁵ At another level, it is homiletics since the interpretation of these texts is mediated through a parable²¹⁶ that he specifically created for the task.²¹⁷ In this parable, specific details correspond with main points in the homily. For example, this world is the drum of water. The fish is the sinner. The rat is the preacher. The rat’s message is about repentance from sin and faith in God.²¹⁸

He used the parable to facilitate understanding and because this is a common way of communicating in his context.²¹⁹ However, the parable also controls his use of Jer 1:12 in that God’s promise to Israel with respect to his word through the prophet

²¹¹ Makukula, p. 22, 23-24.

²¹² Banda, “Excursus XVII,” p. 11.

²¹³ Ibid., p. 8.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 11-12.

²¹⁵ Jer 1:12; John 1:1-4, 14; Matt 4:4. Phiri, “Excursus XIV,” p. 1, 3.

²¹⁶ A summary is as follows: A hunter went to hunt venison but failed to find any. On the way back, he caught a fish in a stream. Upon reaching home, he found that his wife had found other food. Therefore, he kept the fish alive in a drum of water and fed it. The house rat saw this and warned the fish to leave the drum for there was danger in it. The fish refused to take heed. Eventually, the man cooked the fish and ate it. Ibid., p. 1-2.

²¹⁷ Ibid., p. 9.

²¹⁸ Phiri, “Excursus XIV,” p. 4.

²¹⁹ Ibid., p. 10-12.

becomes God's warning through Phiri to the Sinda²²⁰ audience concerning their redemption. There is no discussion of the word in Jeremiah.

'Incarnating Scripture' marks the end of ways in which the respondents extend Scripture. The next section documents how they measure the authenticity of their extensions.

C. Divine Effect

This section evaluates the fidelity of the messenger to God and identifies good biblical hermeneutics and homiletics. For the respondents, evaluating messenger fidelity is evaluating 'heeding' fidelity as a reflection of the messenger's authenticity, their hermeneutics and homiletics. Faithful servants 'produce' good interpretations as evident from the results of their sermons. Note that the *evaluative voice* in focus here is that of the preachers (except in one isolated case) in keeping with the limitations of the data.²²¹

Evaluations of 'heeding' fidelity define servants of God. In this role the preacher is also a hearer, albeit chronologically prior to his or her audience.

The results of faithful 'heeding' start with the preachers themselves. Therefore, Nkhonjera argues that he cannot "give food to the flock which he has not eaten," for the way God is dealing with him is the way he is going to deal with his flock.²²²

Charlton Phiri also regards his own benefit as a critical part of his preparation for preaching. However, benefit here is synonymous with 'comprehension.' Like Tembo above,²²³ he considers preaching to be essentially communicating his own appropriation of the Word of God. Therefore, his own understanding is a test on behalf of the congregation.²²⁴

²²⁰ This is a settlement in the Eastern province of Zambia.

²²¹ Cf. section A.2.b, pp. 68-69.

²²² Nkhonjera, p. 13.

²²³ Cf. pp. 99 and 111.

²²⁴ Phiri, "Excursus XIX," p. 8. In this regard, he notes that he does not say what he has not been convinced of himself as the message of a specific text.

S. L. Mbewe also sees the work that revelation accomplishes in the preacher's life as indicative of its potency in others.²²⁵ By contrast, the preaching of those who preach 'out of their mind' does not have any impact on the people.²²⁶

Evaluations of 'heeding' fidelity also extend to his role as messenger, what L. Phiri calls 'God's sound box'.²²⁷ The respondents think that hearers evaluate their messages and delivery based on the spiritual benefit or 'impact' that they get from them. 'Impact' is God's ministry to the hearer. It is as if hermeneutics cannot be done outside the constraints of an actively revealing God and a hearer(s). The testimony of the spiritual community is what validates revelation.

For Nkhonjera, the witness of the 'Logos' and the testimony of believers validate the 'Rhema'. A 'Rhema' authentically received from God does not contradict the 'Logos' and a 'Rhema' faithfully delivered to the congregation generates spiritual consensus and peace in the hearers.²²⁸ There has been 'impact' when the preacher sees that "what I was aiming at has happened."²²⁹ However, he recognizes that his congregation also have the Holy Spirit and therefore, the ability to evaluate his ministry independently: "There is...somewhere where we meet, where we agree in spirit. So, as the flock and myself as pastor [we ought to agree in the Spirit]."²³⁰

For Moses Kunda (the only voice of a member of the congregation in the data), 'impact' essentially means that the Spirit of God in both the hearer (Christian) and the preacher confirms that what is preached is his Word. 'Confirmation' generates "peace and deep conviction" in the hearer in keeping with the Word's instrumentality in teaching, correcting or rebuking according to 2 Tim 3:16-17.²³¹

²²⁵ Mbewe, "Excursus XXI," p. 17.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Phiri, "Excursus XII," p. 4.

²²⁸ Nkhonjera, p. 14, 15-16. Cf. The Jerusalem Council where a form of consensus between the members of the Council and the Holy Spirit seemed to resolve the matter of the inclusion of Gentiles among the people of God. Acts 5:28.

²²⁹ Nkhonjera, p. 11.

²³⁰ Nkhonjera, p. 15.

²³¹ Mbewe, "Excursus XXI," p. 26.

Chapter 5: Evaluation of the Underlying Epistemology in the Zambian Data and its Relation to the Practice of Hermeneutics and Homiletics

In the preceding chapter, we reduced the field data to epistemological categories that lend themselves to analysis. The method there was descriptive and the aim to include all the respondents' explanations for the links between their texts and their homilies. In this chapter, we evaluate the underlying epistemology using the epistemological framework in Chapter 2.

In the first part of this chapter, we will explore the evidence within the data that demonstrates how the epistemological constitution of the respondents relates to their hermeneutics and homiletics. In the second part, we will examine the data for other possible causes for their hermeneutics and homiletics.

A. Epistemology in the Research Data in the Light of the African Epistemological Constitution in Chapter 2

The summary in Chapter 2 discusses select socio-cultural and epistemological phenomena under three major headings: coherence and spirituality of creation, coherence and hierarchy of society, and concreteness. For the sake of harmony, the same headings will guide our epistemological analysis here.

The ensuing epistemological constitution should be tempered by the following considerations: (1) In spite of evidence that Christian traditions do not precisely determine the understanding of the respondents, the vast majority are from Pentecostal or Charismatic churches where a robust pneumatology is central to their beliefs and practices; (2) Beyond Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions, a very limited number of Protestant traditions is represented and none from the Roman Catholic church (albeit due to sermon-originality concerns for the absence of the latter); (3) Their training, both formal and the entire process of indoctrination into specific Christian traditions, will have some effect on the cosmology of the respondents, particularly in relation to the way they perceive spiritual realities and relate themselves to biblical traditions; (4) Awareness of these qualifications should

enable us to distinguish what stems from their socio-cultural realities from what could be due to other causes with greater critical judgement. This is in keeping with our premise that confessed subjectivities enhance critical analysis.

A.1. Coherence and Spirituality of Creation

We noted in Chapter 2 that African worldviews are holistic. Thus, there is no formal distinction between the sacred and the secular, the spiritual and the material. For this reason, Africans find no discrepancy in explaining 'natural phenomena' in spiritual terms because spiritual forces are understood as active in the natural order and are the ultimate causes of all events and circumstances. God created human beings. Holism also circumscribed ritual in African societies.

The data reveals coherence and spirituality in a holistic manner in the created order at several points. We will first proceed with the coherence motif.

'Shared humanity' and 'relationship with the God of the Bible' established continuity between biblical Israel and the Christian believer.²³² The developmental nature of revelation that rendered some practices obsolete does not abrogate these bases.²³³

Common challenges of faith also illustrate this continuity as also a common adversary.²³⁴ The call to devotion and holiness is common to both parties.²³⁵ Thus worshipping God in spirit and truth is the same for both.²³⁶ In addition, the same power of God operates in and through both as God's people.²³⁷

On these bases, all the spiritual experiences of Israel serve as lessons for the Christian's spiritual walk with God. This is the rationale for the extensive 'hermeneutic of reflection' and 'hermeneutic of empathy' that we encounter in the data.

²³² See Chapter 4, section A.1, W. Palula, John Phiri and Khetson Mbewe, 82-85.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Palula and Khetson Mbewe, pp. 82, 84.

²³⁵ John Phiri, p. 83.

²³⁶ Charlton Phiri, p. 83-84.

²³⁷ Khetson Mbewe, p. 84.

The observations above reflect how deeply the respondents understand that *shared experiences* evidence the homogenous nature of the commonwealth of the people of God in every generation. Spiritual experiences build on creature-hood as a basis for coherence or homogeneity between Israel and the Christian believer.

This also illustrates epistemological concreteness in that it demonstrates how empirical reality both precedes and interpenetrates philosophical reflection. Israel and Christians share common life challenges and seek God's succour in the same ways *because* they are one. This understanding reflects a key component of African cosmologies: Creation originates from God the creator.

The 'spirituality of creation' motif surfaces in implicit discourse. There are allusions to an overarching cosmology. Beyond God's immanence, Satan is part of an unchanging spiritual reality.²³⁸ Satan or his host are presumed to be present everywhere, particularly where the people of God are gathered, seeking to destroy human beings.²³⁹

Satan and his host have dominion over portions of humanity and human activity. Thus, a congregant equated stopping seeing the witchdoctor and coming to church on Sunday with repenting.²⁴⁰ This is because 'seducing spirits' are understood to be behind the medicines of the witchdoctor and receiving their prescriptions is tantamount to submitting to the devil.²⁴¹ On the other hand, human beings ultimately live or die at God's discretion.²⁴²

The 'spirituality of creation' motif also surfaces in explicit discourse. The world is under the dominion of two principal spiritual beings: God and Satan. Under these, we find innumerable spiritual beings. Satan is the ruler of this world but God is sovereign over all. Human beings are either under the authority of God or of Satan, but never independent of both. Salvation in Christ essentially means leaving the dominion of Satan for God's.²⁴³ Bondage to the devil is the default scenario for

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Makukula, Nkhonjera and Chisenga, pp. 87-88.

²⁴⁰ P. 88.

²⁴¹ Makukula and John Phiri, p. 88-89.

²⁴² Chisenga, p. 88.

²⁴³ Khetson Mbewe, pp. 84,90 and Makukula, p. 87.

humankind.²⁴⁴ The fact that African cosmology is spiritual means it ought to be used as a resource for reading biblical texts.²⁴⁵

Further discourse concerning the ‘spirituality of creation’ relates to the participation of spiritual forces in human activities or products of human activities. One such product is Scripture. There was no discussion of the human authorship of Scripture, likely a reflection of an understanding that human agency under God does not subtract from the fact that Scripture is divine revelation. There is no hint of the notion that human agency compromised this revelation. As inspired of God, Scripture is one in source, authority and theological content.²⁴⁶

In spite of being historical and occasional, the Scriptures address generic spiritual issues facing the people of God in every generation. For this reason, people of God everywhere and in every generation can appropriate their teachings for their own journeys of faith and are addressees of the Scriptures, standing in the same spiritual place (isotopically) with their occasional audiences.²⁴⁷

Human volition is critical to God’s rule. For example, people ‘choose’, in the light of ‘conviction’ to come under the dominion of God. ‘Redemption’ is the resultant spiritual state and is the same for the people of God in both the Old and New Testaments.²⁴⁸ Likewise, sermon preparation and delivery involve human volition in seeking, anticipating and embracing divine revelation.²⁴⁹ ‘Heeding’ the Holy Spirit requires human initiative because it is possible and quite common for preachers to prepare and preach homilies out with the Holy Spirit’s superintendence.²⁵⁰

Preachers access revelation by constantly remaining open to the ministry of the Spirit of God, while they are using their rational faculties to examine Scripture.²⁵¹ While preaching, they access it by remaining open to the convictions of the Holy Spirit, while they are communicating what constitutes messages from God given during

²⁴⁴ John Phiri, p. 87.

²⁴⁵ Kakoma, p.88.

²⁴⁶ Chapter 4, A.2, pp. 85-86.

²⁴⁷ John Phiri, Chisenga and Charlton Phiri, p. 86; and Khetson Mbewe, p. 90.

²⁴⁸ Makukula and John Phiri, p. 87.

²⁴⁹ Cf. A.3.3. below.

²⁵⁰ Chapter 4, B.1.a, pp. 93-95.

²⁵¹ S. L. Mbewe, p. 93, Chikamata and Millar Phiri, pp. 94-95.

prior 'heeding'. There is no closure to the process of 'heeding' the Holy Spirit.²⁵²

The Spirit of God is always Lord of the sermon event. All this is consistent with the understanding that faith is essentially living under Gods' dominion.

Since living under God is common to all the people of God, 'impact', not fidelity to some human exegetical canons, is the ultimate basis for evaluating 'messages' from God,²⁵³ in essence, the Holy Spirit's endorsement in the hearer's conscience. For this reason, the people of God are those led and taught by the Spirit of God.²⁵⁴ 'Impact' may mean that the listening people of God 'discern' the divine origins of a given message and embrace it as such. This approximates the convicting force of a message. However, it may also mean that God endorses his message by some supernatural act.²⁵⁵

The discourse above illustrates the point made in Chapter 2 that there is no formal distinction in African thought between the spiritual and the material and that the spiritual permeates all material reality. It also explains the suggestion that, for Africans, the spiritual world is the first port of call when circumstances or phenomena occur that transcend their stock of 'common sense.'²⁵⁶

The Old Apostolic Church demonstrates the same cosmology although it does not explicitly credit the Holy Spirit with the church's spiritual hermeneutic. Given their suggested Pentecostal origins,²⁵⁷ a narrative that makes spiritual perception the basis of their hermeneutics should not be surprising.

However, there is another possible epistemological player in this community. The Chewa people still practice an initiation program for young boys into manhood that involves extended isolation from society and intense instruction. The candidates of this program become initiates into what is essentially a secret society that is privy to esoteric secrets.

²⁵² S. L. Mbewe, p. 93; Khetson Mbewe, p. 95.

²⁵³ Chapter 4, C, pp. 113-114.

²⁵⁴ Banda, Nkhonjera, p. 97; Kunda, p. 114.

²⁵⁵ Thus, Khetson Mbewe includes God fulfilling his promises for provision as an integral part of the authentication process. Mbewe, "Excursus XV," p. 13-14.

²⁵⁶ Robin Horton, *Patterns of Thought in Africa and the West: Essays on Magic, Religion and Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 201-202.

²⁵⁷ See Appendix I, pp. 297-298.

Given the obviously trans-national presence of the Old Apostolic Church,²⁵⁸ seeing this esoteric hermeneutic as an extension of Chewa practice is debatable. However, it may just be the case that Chewa custom is partly responsible for the wide appeal and acceptance of this movement among them.

A.2. Coherence and Hierarchy of Society

The discussion of coherence and hierarchy of society in Chapter 2 focuses on the organization of African societies and how individuals understand themselves in relation to others. Africans generally regard communal identity as an integral part of self-identity. Community exists at various levels in ever-widening concentric circles: the family, the extended family, the clan, the tribe, and, eventually, humanity.

In keeping with the continuity between spiritual and physical worlds discussed in part above, community includes ancestors, spiritual powers and ultimately, God. Finally, the chief requirement of an individual's participation in community is the establishment of their position in the hierarchy of a particular community. Resolving this issue is necessary in order to 'indwell' and 'interact' with other members of the community.

The data suggests this worldview at several points. We will explore references to the 'coherence' motif first.

In the preceding section, we identified creature-hood as one basis for community and continuity with Israel in the data. We also noted that coming under the dominion of God constitutes another basis for the 'people of God' in every generation.

In addition to these points, the data refers to another category of community, the congregation. As local manifestations of the 'people of God', preachers and their hearers are birds of the same feathers, participating together in the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

However, in the task of receiving messages from God, preachers serve as proto-recipients and beneficiaries of messages before they serve as messengers. In the task

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 298.

of evaluating homilies, the Spirit's validating ministry, impact, is the decisive yardstick.

In arriving at the messages, the preachers aimed at addressing the felt spiritual needs and circumstances of their congregations. This underscores the fact that the current communities, the congregations, of whom the preachers are part, are the centre of focus.

An important aspect of coherence in African society is consensus building in decision-making. Self-centred thought and behaviour are viewed as detractors from social soundness.²⁵⁹ Consensus building entails agreement in matters among members of the community.

In the data, preachers seek 'consensus among Scriptural witnesses'. Since Scripture is from God and agrees theologically, a teaching is vindicated if it is *demonstrable from several biblical texts*. Thus, it is fallacious to expect a biblical teaching to stand on a single text²⁶⁰ for there is always a 'consensus of textual witnesses' for an authentic teaching from Scripture.

Amassing witnesses demonstrates the preacher's grasp of the breadth and depth of Scripture. However, the Holy Spirit may also reveal cross-references. The logic of 'consensus among witnesses' is an extension and illustration of the importance of consensus building in community. Multiplying witnesses demonstrates and enhances the credibility of a matter.²⁶¹

At least three respondents made explicit references to this logic in African societies.²⁶² Two see this logic used in the Bible.²⁶³ Mbewe, for example, judged this logic to be in operation when Paul presents several scenarios to make the point that faith has priority over observance of the Law and when he alludes to the length of his letter.²⁶⁴

²⁵⁹ Kwasi Wiredu cited in Barry Hallen, *A Short History of African Philosophy* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2002), 25.

²⁶⁰ Chisenga, p. 108.

²⁶¹ Cf. Deut 17:6 and Isa 43:9.

²⁶² Sakala, Mbewe and Chisenga, pp. 107-108.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid. Apparently length corresponds with accumulation of weight of evidence.

‘Consensus building’ is a principle, then, that operates both in society and in establishing a teaching from many textual witnesses. This is so because both texts and societies have in common *witnesses within a fraternity* that governs administration of meanings. Texts, after all, are artefacts of societies, social phenomena that reflect the worldviews and epistemic conventions of particular societies.

The data evidences the ‘hierarchy’ motif in very subtle ways that roughly correspond with the spheres or levels of community noted in the first paragraph of this section. At the highest level, God is separate from creation as creator.²⁶⁵ His priority and sovereignty over human beings are presumed in every discussion pertaining to his revealing and guiding activities in relation to his people. Certainly, the deference that human beings are supposed to give God in all their undertakings underscores God’s priority in knowledge, wisdom and power.

His priority over Satan and his host is presumed in all the discussions pertaining to the redemption of humankind from the dominion of Satan. Bondage to Satan may be the default scenario for human beings, but when they place their faith in God, Satan’s dominion over them is nullified forthwith.²⁶⁶

The data discusses hierarchy explicitly in the context of the sermon event. Here, preachers are prior to their congregations in their roles as proto-recipients and beneficiaries of God’s message for his people and as God’s messengers.

In the first role, preachers are prior to the congregation chronologically. They presumably have an audience or audiences with God where God reveals his messages to them. They experience ‘impact’ and are prepared and commissioned to share the same revelation with the congregation.²⁶⁷

In the second role, preachers are prior to their congregations epistemologically. They receive God’s revelation, ‘see’ spiritual realities and benefit spiritually. They stand before the congregation as emissaries of God bearing his word.²⁶⁸ It is in this role

²⁶⁵ References to God as creator are implied in the context of arguing for commonality among all human beings as created by God. P. 116.

²⁶⁶ Makukula, John Phiri and Chisenga, pp. 87-88.

²⁶⁷ Thus, S. L. Mbewe argues that the ‘impact’ that the preacher experiences in receiving a message from God, is an indicator of its potency on the members of the congregation. P. 114.

²⁶⁸ Nkhonjera, p. 93.

that preachers, particularly those for whom this is a regular undertaking, see themselves as those privileged with frequent visitations from God on behalf of others.²⁶⁹

A.3. Concreteness

As noted in Chapter 2, 'concreteness' is the most pervasive feature of the African epistemological constitution and the point where it most clearly resembles OT realities. At its centre is the predisposition to subsume the abstract in the concrete and empirically discernible. This has led some to argue that Africans have little or no concept of individualism and abstractness.²⁷⁰ The summary in Chapter 2 is limited to considerations of time, communication and language.

Africans generally view time *through* event. We find a paucity of considerations of time apart from circumstances or events. Projected events or circumstances also indicate the future. Calendars are *phenomenon calendars*, events or phenomena that are used as time markers as opposed to mathematical moments.²⁷¹

Communication is a complex exercise in social awareness. It demands that speakers know their positions and that of their addressees in the social hierarchy of the community. It necessitates subtle ways of finding out this information using 'conversation feelers.' It necessitates a measure of distance and formality in communication until these issues have been clarified. It also necessitates indirect communication for keeping for the next man his dignity. All this entails indirect speech and the ongoing need for 'reading between the lines'.²⁷²

In language, etymologies generally arise from empirical encounters vis-à-vis how something is experienced. Thus, African languages easily lend themselves to imagery and teachings are usually mediated through life-like stories or narratives.²⁷³

²⁶⁹ Thus Nkhonjera, for instance, regards himself to be a 'spiritual visionary'. Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Chapter 2, p. 51.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 52-53.

²⁷² Ibid., 55-58.

²⁷³ Ibid.

Interpreting these narratives requires the same skills as those associated with communication above.

Africans also have rich proverbial traditions and a host of figurative genres. Indeed, even early protagonists of Modern Missions in this regard recognised their affinities with Semitic languages.²⁷⁴

The research data reveals aspects of these observations at several points. The ‘concreteness’ motif permeates virtually all the topics raised in the data.

A.3.1. Concreteness and the People of God

As noted earlier, issues of ontology such as ‘the reality of God,’²⁷⁵ ‘the creature-hood of humanity,’²⁷⁶ ‘faith in God’ and empirical issues such as ‘the nature of the challenges associated with this faith,’ and ‘the power of God operating through the people of God,’²⁷⁷ constitute evidence for continuity between Israel and the Christian. Of course, in the Old Apostolic Church, their foundational narrative establishes their continuity with Israel.²⁷⁸

Admittedly, all these arguments are rooted in a particular theological meta-narrative, that of the biblical story. However, it is still noteworthy that none of the respondents argues for continuity with Israel solely based on some abstract argument. They argue based on phenomenological and empirically testable bases: *what they experience and do indicating who they understand themselves to be.*

A.3.2. Concreteness in the Unity and Continuity of Scripture

As in the section above, a theological meta-narrative is the immediate basis for the ‘arguments’ for the unity and continuity of Scripture. The meta-narrative of the God of the Bible revealing himself to his people precedes any experience of God and,

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 58.

²⁷⁵ Chapter 4, A.1, pp. 82-85.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 83.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 83-84.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 84-85.

thus, any phenomenon. However, the level at which the matters of authority and inspiration of Scripture are settled is phenomenological and empirical. This is the ongoing phenomenological praxis between the Holy Spirit and the people of God.

A revealing God is the gnostic reality that permeates both the giving of Scripture and several facets of revelation today. Even validation of Scripture lies in a living experience. Its authority and spirituality lie in the stature and character of its giver and *precedes* Scripture as text or any critical examination of it. All this betrays the fact that there is a basic ontology behind any discussion of life-experience and its artefacts: the ‘spirituality of creation’.

God’s revealing acts entail divine testimony and come with the presupposition that God (and therefore the Scriptures as well) does not contradict himself.²⁷⁹ The same meta-narrative makes the teachings of Scripture generic for the people of God in every generation because there are no changes in God, Satan, the ontology of the people of God, and their experiences under these scenarios.²⁸⁰ This is what makes the experiences of the biblical people of God didactic for all subsequent generations of the people of God.

The same meta-narrative finds human scholarly activity apart from God inadequate for biblical hermeneutics. God as creator is prior in knowledge, wisdom, and power to humanity. Human knowing is finite and can *never* approximate God’s revealing acts.²⁸¹ Finally, human beings, as those destined to be either under the dominion of Satan or God, lack the epistemological capacity for independent testing of God’s revelation. Historical critical analysis of Scripture must be conducted in the context of the Holy Spirit’s revealing ministry.²⁸²

At this stage, we have come full circle to the starting point of the hermeneutics of the respondents: their worldview and, within it, their epistemological constitution. Spiritual reality and priority inform the unity and continuity of the Scriptures. They understand that this meta-narrative reflects their cosmologies but insist that the

²⁷⁹ Chapter 4, A.2, pp. 85-86.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 83-85.

²⁸¹ This seems to be Paul’s argument in his contrast between ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος and ὁ πνευματικὸς in 1 Cor 2:14-15.

²⁸² Mbewe, Chikamata and Millar Phiri, pp. 93-95.

cosmological similarity should be regarded as a resource for biblical hermeneutics, not an impediment.²⁸³

A.3.3. Concreteness in the Immanence of God

At the risk of repetitiveness, we note that the concrete phenomenological praxis of the Holy Spirit among God's people is the basis for Christian thought and practice in the data. This is what is thrashed out in 'Extending Scripture,' 'Multitude of Witnesses,' 'Incarnating Scripture,' and 'Divine Effect.' Therefore, from the perspective of 'concreteness,' we will treat all these aspects under 'Immanence of God.'

Simply put, concreteness in immanence is the consciousness and experience of living in the midst of and at the discretion of spiritual authorities.²⁸⁴ This consciousness and experience leads to concrete ways of perceiving, approaching and doing particular tasks.

A.3.3.a. Concreteness and Redemption

For Palula, volitional act that is based on *inner sight* and is effected by an act of the will is at the centre of redemption. Christ merely 'simplified everything' but faith is the same in both testaments.²⁸⁵

John Phiri identifies 'choice' in the light of 'awareness of God's ways and of lostness' as the prerequisite for coming under the dominion of God. 'Choice' is a definite 'turning point' and leads to 'meeting the Lord' by faith and being 'changed'.²⁸⁶ 'Redemption' is synonymous with 'serving and worshipping God' and is not different for Israel and the Christian believer.²⁸⁷ In the Old Apostolic Church

²⁸³ Makukula, pp. 87 and 111-112; and Kakoma, p. 88.

²⁸⁴ Thus, Palula insisted that we acknowledge God's presence before proceeding with the interview. Palula, "Excursus III," p. 6.

²⁸⁵ P. 89.

²⁸⁶ Phiri, "Excursus XIX," p. 3, 18.

²⁸⁷ Pp. 89-90.

tradition, redemption is the equivalent of God having a stake in a person's life which entails 'having power' over you.²⁸⁸

'Choice' is illustrated in the testimony of the congregant who 'chose God' (coming to church) over the services of a witchdoctor.²⁸⁹ It is also implied in the characterisation of 'seducing spirits' as spiritual beings who essentially come to 'entice' the people of God with promises of selfish and earthly profit in order to bring them under Satan's dominion.²⁹⁰

A.3.3.b. Concreteness and Revelation

The data reveals different aspects of concrete interaction between a person and spirit beings. Given that all the respondents identified themselves as those belonging to the dominion of God, most of the interaction relates to ways in which God reveals his counsels and himself to his people. However, there are implicit references to revelations involving people out with the dominion of God and we discuss these first.

A.3.3.b.i. Concreteness and Revelation outside the Dominion of God

There is consensus in the data that Satan and his host stand behind prescriptions from witchdoctors. This is because witchdoctors depend on revelations from spiritual authorities other than God for their cures. In this regard, they stand in exactly the same place under the dominion of Satan as their counterparts under the dominion of God.

Thus, when Christians consult witchdoctors when faced with a crisis, it is viewed as anomalous with their profession of faith in God.²⁹¹ Carrying charms or amulets inhibits redemption because it shows a contradiction of loyalties.²⁹² Seeking the assistance of a herbalist when sick is the equivalent of paying heed to seducing

²⁸⁸ Phiri, "Excursus XII," p. 6.

²⁸⁹ P. 88.

²⁹⁰ Makukula, p. 1-14.

²⁹¹ Mujumira, p. 12.

²⁹² Mbewe, "Excursus XV," p. 6.

spirits and exposing yourself to the power of the witchdoctor and of ungodliness. It is in essence bowing down to spirits.²⁹³ The mutually exclusive nature of these spiritual domains is evident when “those who do not belong to [God’s] household” cannot stand the company of God’s people presumably because they are demon-possessed.²⁹⁴

A.3.3.b.ii. Concreteness and Revelation in Receiving God’s Messages

As earlier pointed out, the data revealed that preaching is essentially passing on revelation to the congregation. Within the meta-narrative of the lordship of the God of the Bible, therefore, the centre of epistemological activity is the phenomenon of spiritual rapport between the preacher and God.

Through the same phenomenon in conjunction with the Scriptures, preachers ‘access’ divine messages for the people. This ‘presence’ can only be lost when the children of God succumb to the seductions of Satan and his host.²⁹⁵

The phenomenon yields several types of revelation. They include discerning the spiritual needs of the people, texts of Scripture and their hermeneutic in specific circumstances (which may include interpretations ‘beyond’ historical critical ones),²⁹⁶ and understanding the Scriptures in their historical critical sense.²⁹⁷ The phenomenon is also the context for ‘impact’ in the proto-receiver that adumbrates the ‘impact’ it will accomplish in the congregation.²⁹⁸

A.3.3.b.iii. Concreteness and Revelation in Delivering God’s Messages

Within the meta-narrative of the lordship of the God of the Bible, messages are concrete entities because they are inspired speech where ‘inspired’ also refers to their

²⁹³ Makukula, p. 3-4.

²⁹⁴ Chikamata, p. 4. Cf. Matt 8 :28-32.

²⁹⁵ Makukula, p. 20-21.

²⁹⁶ Nkhonjera, Kakoma, S. L. Mbewe and Chikamata, pp. 93-94.

²⁹⁷ Millar Phiri, p. 95.

²⁹⁸ Mbewe, “Excursus XXI,” p. 17.

power to ‘impact’ the hearers. Proclamation expands the audience of phenomenological praxis in the sermon event from preacher and God in the preparation processes to preacher, congregation and God with the proviso that God may yet break out in fresh ways.

Correlation of respondent with Christian tradition shows that the phenomenon above²⁹⁹ is largely that of preachers belonging to Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions. However, the data also contains responses that reflect the concepts of ‘preacher as messenger,’ ‘sermon as phenomenological event under the dominion of God’ and ‘impact as measure of fidelity’ from respondents belonging to other Christian traditions.

John Phiri³⁰⁰ equates serving God with escaping the default human condition of bondage to Satan.³⁰¹ He views redemption to be a consequence of human ‘choice’ in the light of ‘conviction’ or ‘impact’, the revelation of God and of Satan.³⁰² He understands hermeneutics as essentially revisiting the record of the spiritual experiences of the people of God in the Scriptures to glean insights for contemporary living.³⁰³ His prayer request demonstrates awareness that God is lord over the sermon event.³⁰⁴

Dickson Banda³⁰⁵ understands God to be present in a supplementary capacity, both during and after the sermon, to his efforts at communicating God’s Word. We noted how this betrayed the possibility of messenger failure in delivering God’s message.³⁰⁶

For Millar Phiri,³⁰⁷ failure to understand some aspect of a text was a consequence of not assigning time to prayer for the Holy Spirit to show him the meaning of the texts.

²⁹⁹ Appendix II.

³⁰⁰ He is a Reformed Church in Zambia cleric.

³⁰¹ P. 87.

³⁰² P. 89.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Phiri, “Excursus XIX,” p. 1.

³⁰⁵ He is an elder in the United Church of Zambia.

³⁰⁶ P. 97.

³⁰⁷ He is a cleric of the Independent Baptist Church.

In his opening prayer, he appealed to God to communicate what He had prepared for his people for that day.³⁰⁸

A.3.4. Concreteness in Communication

Communication, perhaps more than any other activity in the data, brings together the philosophical and cultural-specific aspects of the African's epistemological constitution to bear on the task of biblical hermeneutics and homiletics.

There was broad consensus among the respondents that comprehension was the goal of homiletics. Both those who rooted understanding of meanings in the biblical texts in the revealing activities of the Holy Spirit³⁰⁹ and those who rooted it largely in the efforts of the preacher's studious and meticulous analysis of texts³¹⁰ identify 'impact' in various ways to be the goal of preaching.

Even those who do not explicitly advocate this starting point evidence it in their understanding that re-visiting the spiritual experiences of biblical characters and other phenomenological praxes between God and humanity instructs their congregations concerning their spiritual lives under God.³¹¹ The goal of hermeneutics of 'reflection' and 'empathy' is unveiling the unchanging counsels of God in the texts for the guidance of the contemporary pilgrim and, as such, they are forms of 're-heeding' God's revelation for current use.

We noted that African languages display movement from the generic to the specific,³¹² overwhelmingly display preference for imagery, the figurative and the poetical all which lend themselves to concreteness,³¹³ and that they form their

³⁰⁸ P. 95.

³⁰⁹ These are largely those respondents who belong to Pentecostal and Charismatic Christian traditions e.g. Kakoma, S. L. Mbeve, Nkhonjera and Mackwell Nyirenda.

³¹⁰ These are largely those who belong to Reformed Christian traditions e.g. Sakala, John Phiri and Mujumira. However, these classifications are not rigid. Mang'ombe Tembo comes from a Charismatic breakaway movement from the Reformed Church of Zambia but still advocates strict historical critical reading of biblical texts (pp. 98-99). Millar belongs to a Reformed Baptist tradition, but roots his biblical hermeneutics in the revealing activity of the Holy Spirit (p. 95).

³¹¹ E.g. Charlton Phiri (pp. 101-102), or Palula (pp. 82-83).

³¹² Chapter 2, p. 56.

³¹³ Ibid., 58.

vocables from the root of the verb.³¹⁴ The data reveals aspects of these features at various points.

A.3.4.a. Concreteness in Language and Idiom

For several respondents, prioritizing comprehension entailed speaking in the vernacular languages or, for those not native to the areas or not fluent in the local languages, attempting to do so. In two cases,³¹⁵ Bemba, the language of the Bemba people of Northern Province but also widely spoken in Luapula and Copperbelt Provinces, was the language of the homilies. This appears to have been for two reasons.

First, Bemba was the language the two respondents knew best. Second, Bemba is widely associated with the United Church of Zambia and Christians in this tradition are largely familiar with the language.³¹⁶ However, we focus on the concreteness of expression as opposed to the specific languages used although, where the goal is comprehension, the two could be related.

In recounting the ‘parable of the foolish rich man,’³¹⁷ Godwin Nkonde recasts the internal thought processes of the rich man³¹⁸ in Bemba idiom. The thoughts are not depicted as ‘reasoning to himself’ (NASB) but the input of ‘something’ or ‘someone’, suggesting some thoughts to him.³¹⁹ His goal was to recreate the thought processes that must have gone on in the rich man’s mind, itself a demonstration of the ‘hermeneutic of empathy’ in operation. However, in Bemba expression, it is usual to express thoughts that present themselves to the mind in grammatical terms that suggest an instigating subject.³²⁰

³¹⁴ Ibid., 57.

³¹⁵ Godwin Nkonde and David Mujumira.

³¹⁶ Cf. Appendices I and II.

³¹⁷ Luke 12:16-21. ‘Parable of the foolish rich man’, according to the Nyanja translation of the Bible read during this service.”

³¹⁸ Luke 12:17-19.

³¹⁹ Godwin Nkonde, “Excursus IX: ‘Bukangalila.’ A Homily Delivered at St. Paul’s United Church of Zambia, Katete, 28 July 2003,” Sermon and Interview, p. 2-3, Katete, Zambia.

³²⁰ Ibid., p. 8-9.

Here, then, Bemba language demonstrates preference for the imagery of narrative and thus concreteness over basic statement of fact. Philosophical aspects and cultural-specific aspects, in this case language, merge in aid of comprehension. We encounter the same phenomenon in Mbewe's exposition of the parable of the Prodigal Son that includes an elaborate re-creation of the internal thought processes and behaviour of the elder son.³²¹

Chisenga interprets "Praise," perhaps as an exposition of "Bless,"³²² in terms of its manifestation in Zambian cultures, particularly where the praised is a dignitary such as a chief or a senior government official. Therefore, praise includes song, dance, ululating, the giving of gifts and the like. It is definitely not passive or silent but manifests in audible ways accompanied by action,³²³ for praise "must be visible."³²⁴

This represents a reading of Scripture *through* African eyes. However, his expectation appears to be that meanings develop from the generic to the particular. If so, we have the rationale for the way he assumes the broadest possible semantic ranges for 'praise,' 'healing,' and the like according to his African understanding of language.

Elsewhere, he substitutes an abstract word for a concrete one and a foreign (hence abstract) analogy for a local one. Therefore, "the church in God's *perspective*" is changed to "the church in God's *eyes*" and "as white as *snow*" is substituted with "as white as *cotton*".³²⁵

The data also contains several instances where the respondents' propensity for imagery and the figurative *in interpreting* texts and the premise of a shared body of knowledge that only needs a link to reference it manifest themselves.

Palula regards the parable of the prodigal son³²⁶ as representing the message of Grace in Christ through typological and symbolic reading. He even reads typologically the fact that he tended pigs ("not chicken or goat or cattle"), an accursed animal

³²¹ Mbewe, "Excursus XXI," p. 18-19.

³²² Ps 103:1.

³²³ Chisenga, "Excursus II," p. 10-12.

³²⁴ Ibid., p. 12. Cf. p. 109.

³²⁵ Chisenga, "Excursus XVIII," p. 1 and Chisenga, "Excursus II," p. 3., respectively.

³²⁶ Luke 15:11-32.

according to Levitical law. Therefore, tending pigs, “that very detail,” symbolizes sins, the sinful lifestyle of the son.³²⁷

We see, then, that the mere mention of ‘pigs’ is understood to evoke the entire perception of pigs in Levitical law. For him, such referencing is evident, hence supported, in another incident involving Jesus where evil spirits specifically asked for permission to enter a herd of pigs that then drowned.³²⁸

Elsewhere, Israel’s bondage in Egypt³²⁹ typifies life in sin. The exodus typifies redemption from a life of bondage to sin to life under the rule of God. As such, when God warned Israel against enthroning a foreigner as king over them, and against returning to Egypt, he was also warning the contemporary believer against reverting to lives of sin.³³⁰ John Phiri endorses the typology that makes the bondage of Israel in Egypt a reference to humanity’s sinfulness and the exodus an adumbration of redemption in Christ.³³¹

For Kakoma, the parable of the prodigal son typifies the relationships between God the Father, the Christian who is aware of the father’s love (the younger brother) and the Christian who is not aware of the father’s love (the elder brother).³³² S. L. Mbewe interprets the same parable as an allegory where the father is a type of God, the older brother a type of the self-centred Christian and the younger brother a type of an unbeliever.³³³

Charlton Phiri understands ‘donkeys’ in terms of local perception of the species as ‘foolish’, ‘slow to understand’. Therefore, Abraham hid the real reason for taking Isaac up Mount Moriah from his servants and left them *with the donkeys* because they were ‘foolish’ and would not understand God’s command.³³⁴ Apparently, the mention of ‘donkeys’ generates this interpretation.³³⁵

³²⁷ Palula, “Excursus III,” p. 9. Cf. Lev 11:7; Deut 14:3, 8.

³²⁸ Ibid., p. 9. Cf. Luke 8:26-32.

³²⁹ Exod 1-15.

³³⁰ Palula, “Excursus III,” p. 4.

³³¹ Phiri, “Excursus XIX,” p. 11.

³³² P. 102.

³³³ P. 104.

³³⁴ Pp. 101-102.

³³⁵ Ibid. Cf. note 128.

In all the cases above, there is no mistaking the propensity for assigning figurative meanings, arguably out with historical critical warrant.

Yesaya Banda not only reads his text *through* his epistemological framework but also *through* his socio-cultural realities. He applies meanings from his context to the text.³³⁶ His practice appears to be influenced by the ‘familiarity’ of the world of the text to him.

A.3.4.b. Concreteness in Cultural-Specific Communication

The data demonstrates the epistemological tendencies associated with Africans in the tools used for communication. It is also evident in the way some respondents treat elements of the biblical text that they consider based on conceptual principles that are not unlike theirs.

In the first sense, there is a proliferation of repetitive modes of argumentation, figures of speech, use of the question, metaphors and even parables. The practice of amassing textual witnesses in support of a teaching is also very prevalent. This practice is replicated in local Chewa traditional court procedures.³³⁷

A question or an exclamation, usually at the end of a statement, is a rhetorical device for drawing attention to an important point and ensuring the participation of the congregation.³³⁸ Rhetorical questions whose answers complete the preacher’s points are also used to draw the congregation into the construction of points.³³⁹ The question, then, is a socio-cultural device for engaging the congregation and inviting it into the evolution of the sermon.

³³⁶ P. 111.

³³⁷ P. 107.

³³⁸ For example, there is a prevalence of the refrain, “*mwamvetsetsa?*” (“Do you follow?”) and its cognates, the use of “Amen?”, and various other interrogative expressions intended to elicit an affirmative answer in Kanyemba’s sermon. Kanyemba, “Excursus I.” For Chisenga, “Amen?”, “Hallelujah!” and “Are we together?” fulfil this function. Chisenga, “Excursus II”, “Excursus XVIII.” For Charlton Phiri, it is “Are you getting the point?” Phiri, “Excursus XX.”

³³⁹ For example, S. L. Mbewe explicitly demands that the congregation participates in the sermon by supplying answers to largely rhetorical questions. Mbewe, “Excursus VII.” For L. Phiri, the entire sermon is an exercise in interactive discourse with the congregation where the latter collectively answer questions aimed at creating a particular understanding. Phiri, “Excursus XII.”

The data shows the *use* of figures of speech and metaphors in communication at various points. Two sermons will suffice to demonstrate the *variety and extent to which communication is mediated through figures of speech*.

In her rather short homily, Kanyemba Phiri employs several figures of speech to encourage women in church to aspire to greater spirituality and godliness. She conveys the exclusiveness and distinctiveness of serving God or Satan using the metaphors of the colours ‘white’ or ‘black’ respectively.³⁴⁰ She conveys spiritual progress using the analogy of running. Actual comparison of race times employs hyperbole: “If you were running at 10 kilometres per hour, then everyday you exercise, in a week’s time you will be running at 100 kilometres [per hour].”³⁴¹

External demeanour, the shine of shoes, evidences godliness and a “clean mind”³⁴² evidencing the point that Africans have a predisposition to think holistically and to subsume abstract issues in visible phenomena or state as a feature of concreteness. A blunt pencil is an analogy for obtuse speech, such as gossip, in the Christian.³⁴³

She refers to lack of numerical growth of the congregation in Katete since its inception using the metaphor from agriculture, planting expired seed (as opposed to “quality declared seed”).³⁴⁴ She also uses the analogy of a malnourished child, again using hyperbole: “If you have a child at home, six years old, but that child can’t even walk, as a parent, how do you feel?”³⁴⁵

She contrasts godliness with ungodliness using the metaphors of a full tin and an empty tin and the sounds they produce when beaten. The tins are Christians. A full tin “represents Jesus” or “works”.³⁴⁶ Finally, she communicates the relationship between investment and spiritual fruit using the analogy of gardening tomatoes, again in hyperbolic terms.³⁴⁷

³⁴⁰ Phiri, “Excursus I,” p. 2.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Kanyemba, p. 2.

³⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 3. It is worth noting that Kanyemba Phiri is a technical officer with a local cotton company and she regularly oversees the lending of farm inputs, including certified or ‘quality declared’ seed, to cotton farmers.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 3.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

Kanyemba says she taught using so many figures of speech and illustrations because of the composition of the congregation. She would use different methods of pedagogy were she addressing a congregation largely made up of people with high levels of formal education and high standing in society.³⁴⁸

Chisenga's second sermon is an address to lay church leaders participating in a Bible College Program. In composition, it is the sort of congregation that Kanyemba above suggests would require a more direct approach in communication.³⁴⁹ However, Chisenga's methods of pedagogy are not different from Kanyemba's.

His interprets Rev 2:1-7 through safeguards and filters arising from personal experience with malicious letters (as opposed to the historical and grammatical background of the text).³⁵⁰ This generates rather esoteric meanings. For example, a persecuted John, presumably wont to doubt the resurrection and continuing presence of Jesus Christ, needed the assurance of 'personal contact' from Jesus.³⁵¹ Therefore, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades,"³⁵² provides such contact and settles the issues of 'authority' and 'identity'.³⁵³ "Write therefore the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and things which shall take place after these things"³⁵⁴ becomes the 'purpose' of the letter.³⁵⁵

The churches in the first 'two or three chapters' are symbolic of Christians in every age.³⁵⁶ "Things which you have seen, and things which are, and things which shall take place after these things" refers to the circumstances of the church in every generation, as also the words of commendation and rebuke.³⁵⁷ The text is gnomic and

³⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 7.

³⁴⁹ He actually explicitly makes this very point at the onset of his sermon: "And because it appears that most of you are students, I want to be...more scholarly, so that it can be like you are still learning Bible Interpretation." Chisenga, "Excursus XVIII," p. 1.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 6-7.

³⁵¹ Ibid., p. 7-8.

³⁵² Rev 1:17-8. NASB.

³⁵³ Chisenga, "Excursus XVIII," p. 2.

³⁵⁴ Rev 1:19. NASB.

³⁵⁵ Chisenga, "Excursus XVIII," p. 2.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

³⁵⁷ Chisenga, "Excursus XVIII," p. 12.

Chisenga uses it to address various things that are commendable or otherwise in his congregation, 'in God' eyes.³⁵⁸

He explains "You have left your first love"³⁵⁹ using analogies from his marriage with hyperbolic accompaniments.³⁶⁰ Other analogies (with hyperbole) follow in the same vein: decline in the discipline of fasting, bringing people to Christ and memorizing texts of Scripture.³⁶¹

Chisenga admits that he resorted to hyperbole and other figurative communication so much because 'it made things easier to understand'. He learned this skill from his upbringing, not his Homiletics lectures in theological college.³⁶²

The data reveals the use of figurative devices on a grander scale than that demonstrated above.

Millar Phiri's homily is crafted around a hypothetical *nthano*, literally 'parable,' specifically created for the message at hand. Here, representation and symbolism are applied on a larger scale and essentially carry the message. Understanding the correspondences between the parable and what its constituent parts represent is understanding the message.

He, too, thinks using such devices, "helps the people to understand the message quicker"³⁶³ than explaining the meanings of the biblical text. It has more impact to point out, "The fish was stubborn to the message that the rat was giving it" than to tell the people to their faces, "You are stubborn."³⁶⁴

'Impact' here is equated with 'people paying attention'. The rationale appears to be, in part, that confronting people through analogies or parables creates some distance between the speaker and the subject. This *euphemistic* element is important in societies where the individual's identity is in the group identity and preserving the

³⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 3.

³⁵⁹ Rev 2:4. NASB.

³⁶⁰ Chisenga, "Excursus XVIII," p. 4.

³⁶¹ Chisenga, "Excursus XVIII," p. 4.

³⁶² Ibid., p. 14-15.

³⁶³ Phiri, "Excursus XIV," p. 10.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 10-11.

dignity of the other in public is of paramount importance.³⁶⁵ For example, the genre enables the preacher to confront people without being offensive.

Perceptions that biblical material is based on similar conceptual principles with African forms of discourse abound in the data.

For S. L. Mbewe, Paul's allusion to the length of his letter is based on the premise that a long letter enhances the chances of comprehension for readers. He also interprets Paul's allusion to writing the letter with his own hand as based on the premise that authority figures become personally involved when important issues are at stake. Finally, he interprets Paul's use of several illustrations to argue that faith has priority over observance of the Law as demonstrating that Scripture supports the teaching extensively and therefore based on the premise that many witnesses establish a matter.³⁶⁶

Chisenga attributes the practice of re-stating a teaching using several illustrations to his culture.³⁶⁷ Finally, David Mujumira considers citing biblical texts as adding authority to what the preacher is saying.³⁶⁸

The practices and thought processes above demonstrate that *communication* was mediated *through* the respondents' epistemological constitution. They also demonstrate that the respondents presume that the biblical material corresponds with the forms and nature of African discourse.

B. Other Possible Causes for the Epistemology in the Research Data

Given the disparate nature of the respondents with respect to Christian traditions, theological training and ministerial positions, we may expect that there is more to their hermeneutics and homiletics than epistemological constitution. Below we explore the evidence in the data for other possible causes.

³⁶⁵ Chapter 2, p. 58.

³⁶⁶ Pp. 107-108.

³⁶⁷ P. 108.

³⁶⁸ P. 109.

B.1. Theological Training and Tradition

The data evidences theological presuppositions, hermeneutical approaches and even theories of homiletics that respondents learned in theological schools or that they hold as part of the doctrines of their Christian tradition.³⁶⁹ We consider this evidence as it relates to theological presuppositions, hermeneutical practice and homiletical practice.

B.1.1. Theological Presuppositions Attributable to Training and Christian Tradition

Palula lacks any formal theological training.³⁷⁰ It is likely that his theological acumen stems from a combination of personal study and supplementary Seventh Day Adventist instruction for lay leaders. His impressive grasp of Old Testament narratives and the way he interprets a New Testament text *through* a series of Old Testament narratives suggest deliberate instruction. His confession that understanding the Old Testament is foundational to a deep understanding of Scripture also implies instruction.³⁷¹

For example, in “God’s Mercy is Everlasting,”³⁷² he expounds on God’s mercy in Rom 8:31-33 by recounting a series of Old Testament narratives that *exemplify* its operation and reality.³⁷³ He buttresses these demonstrations of God’s mercy with citations of narratives and other texts that summon the people to respond favourably to God’s mercy.³⁷⁴ In case there is any doubt that this mercy is available to this congregation, he follows every citation with, “So it is with us,”³⁷⁵ or words to that effect.

³⁶⁹ Cf. Appendix II.

³⁷⁰ Cf. Appendix II.

³⁷¹ Palula, “Excursus III,” p. 10-11.

³⁷² Palula, “Excursus III.”

³⁷³ Gen 6:6-8 (His dealings with Noah in the flood narrative); 1 Sam 15:1-2, 11-22. Cf. 1 Sam 8:11-17 (Israel’s insistence on a king and the Saul narratives); and Deut 17:14-20 (God’s foresight concerning kingship in Israel).

³⁷⁴ Rev 2:1-6; Phil 2:9; and Isa 1:18-19.

³⁷⁵ “*Nchimodzi modzi*,” lit. “Likewise [with us].”

John Phiri's sweeping theological perspective that the Scriptures in their entirety are the story of human beings struggling with serving the living God betrays his training in theology.³⁷⁶ It is a feature of the synoptic and systematizing tendencies in Reformed theology that the Bible in its entirety is understood to validate theological positions, in this case, the doctrine of sin.

The same applies to his awareness that the Scriptures were occasional and historical in their giving and that the advent of Christ affected the worship of God in ways that often required discontinuities in practice. Reformed theology generally adheres to the progressive nature of revelation in the Bible. Therefore, his training must be responsible for the way he treats aspects of the Old Testament as typology and fulfilled in Christ and discontinuous with current Christian practice.³⁷⁷

It is certainly the case that the Old Apostolic Church owes its hermeneutic to its founding narrative, itself a theological grand narrative that is passed on as prior to any aspect of their faith and practice.³⁷⁸

B.1.2. Hermeneutical Practices Attributable to Training and Christian Tradition

We may expect that training and tradition that inform a respondent's theological positions inform his or her hermeneutical practices. The grounded nature of this research does not permit us to extrapolate generalisations. However, the influence of Christian tradition on philosophy of hermeneutics and homiletics is evident, even in a sample this size, when some statistics are noted.

Out of twenty-one respondents, the seven who explicitly credit the Holy Spirit for their hermeneutics and homiletics come from Pentecostal or Charismatic Christian traditions.³⁷⁹ Given the centrality of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in these traditions, the question needs to be raised whether their extensive pneumatic hermeneutics and

³⁷⁶ Cf. Appendix II.

³⁷⁷ Pp. 89-90.

³⁷⁸ Pp. 84-85.

³⁷⁹ These include Nkhonjera (pp. 87, 97, and 101), Simon Chikamata (p. 94), S. L. Mbewe (pp. 93, 95 and 103-105), J. Kakoma (pp. 97, 103 and 110), Khetson Mbewe (p. 95), Boyd Makukula (pp. 96 and 111) and Mackwell Nyirenda (pp. 96 and 106).

homiletics are more the result of their Christian traditions than they are of epistemological constitution.

However, contrary evidence in the data complicates this seemingly straightforward deduction. Among those who are clearly Charismatic, the three that discuss their philosophies of hermeneutics and homiletics extensively scarcely mention the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, two respondents from Reformed Christian traditions explicitly allude to the Holy Spirit in relation to their hermeneutics and homiletics.³⁸⁰

This suggests that pneumatic hermeneutics and homiletics are not exclusive to respondents from Pentecostal and Charismatic Christian traditions. However, it may also mean that the ratio of those who explicitly advocate pneumatic hermeneutics and homiletics and who belong to Pentecostal and Charismatic Christian traditions is high because these traditions resonate more with their epistemological constitution, a point which at least two of the respondents admit.³⁸¹

This point is supported by suggestions within the data that movement in biblical hermeneutical methodologies in this part of the world appears to be from historical critical and other study-based approaches to pneumatic ones. For example, Millar Phiri³⁸² and Dickson Banda³⁸³ invoke the Holy Spirit as part of their hermeneutic contrary to regular practice in their Reformed traditions. In addition, Charlton Phiri, an affiliate of a charismatic breakaway movement,³⁸⁴ is given a platform in a non-Pentecostal or Charismatic congregation.³⁸⁵ The very fact that BIGOCA has emerged out of the Reformed Church of Zambia and flourished, suggests a general shift towards pneumatic practices in the nation.

Theological training appears to have influenced the hermeneutics of some respondents. This is demonstrably the case with respect to at least three respondents.

L. Sakala prefers expository preaching to topical preaching because of tendencies in the latter to compromise the historical critical meanings of biblical texts thereby

³⁸⁰ These are Dickson Banda (p. 97) and Millar Phiri (p. 95).

³⁸¹ See Boyd Makukula (pp. 87 and 111) and J. Kakoma (pp. 88 and 110).

³⁸² Independent Baptist.

³⁸³ United Church of Zambia.

³⁸⁴ BIGOCA.

³⁸⁵ The Pilgrim Wesleyan Church in Zambia and this congregation in particular, has been a bastion of Reformed theology for a long time.

reflecting his formal theological training.³⁸⁶ His commitments to the theological unity and integrity of Scripture lead him to the principle that Scripture must be interpreted in the context of the whole Bible in the light of his understanding of 2 Tim 3:16.³⁸⁷ He sees no contradiction between this position, his commitment to expository preaching and the uses of cross-references in that he sees the theological unity of Scripture to be in its historical critical meanings.³⁸⁸

The fact that his preference is based on borrowed epistemological assumptions is evidenced by his struggle to communicate the concept of conversion to his vernacular audience. Therefore, “if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved”³⁸⁹ generates an abstract semantic struggle to communicate the term ‘confess.’ He credits his proselytiser with the idea that salvation in Christ is attained by asking Christ to ‘come into your heart’.³⁹⁰ Meanwhile, he is aware that local Chewa culture (of which he is a part), as also “biblical culture”, does not have a problem with demonstrating the validity of a matter by marshalling together multiple witnesses.³⁹¹

The same tension is evident in the hermeneutics of Simon Chikamata. On the one hand, he argues that historical critical meanings are important since they ought to delineate the parameters of meaning available to the preacher from a given text.³⁹² In practice however, he applies texts in ways that border on allegorism and often bear no resemblance at all to their historical critical meanings.³⁹³

His exegetical philosophy that the pastoral situation, not the text, is the starting point in hermeneutics is partly responsible for this. Scripture is only to be resorted to in search of resource texts whose historical critical meanings *approximate* the message that the preacher feels led of God to give to the people.³⁹⁴ In his case, his Bible

³⁸⁶ Sakala, p. 16.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 19.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ Rom 10:9. NASB.

³⁹⁰ Sakala, p. 12.

³⁹¹ P. 107.

³⁹² Chikamata, p. 14-15.

³⁹³ Pp. 105-106.

³⁹⁴ Chikamata, p. 16.

college training is at odds with his philosophy of hermeneutics. He acknowledges the former in theory but operates within the boundaries of meaning set by the latter.

Redson Chisenga attributes his tendency to cite many texts of Scripture in support of a teaching to his theological training, allowing Scripture to interpret Scripture.

However, he is also aware that this mirrors African practice.³⁹⁵ His tendency to depart from historical critical meanings³⁹⁶ suggests that African practice influences his hermeneutics more than his theological training.

B.2. Priority of Audience

Priority of audience is an a priori commitment and thus may be construed as a theological presupposition. However, since it is as much concerned with relevance as it is with theological understanding, we treat it separately.

All the respondents that were asked to identify the goal of their preaching indicated benefiting their audiences.³⁹⁷ There is no doubt that this goal influenced their hermeneutics and homiletics. We may classify such influence using two categories: in relation to substantive meanings of texts (hermeneutics) and in relation to communication only (homiletics).

The second category targets comprehension and exploits the epistemological constitution of the audience to achieve this aim without using the constitution for understanding biblical texts.³⁹⁸ We will concentrate, therefore, on the first category because it supplies a different basis for ascribing meanings to biblical texts from those already covered above.

‘Priority of audience’ means that the need to interpret biblical texts for the spiritual benefit of the audience both precedes and often overrides adherence to historical

³⁹⁵ P. 108.

³⁹⁶ Pp. 136-137.

³⁹⁷ This issue did not always arise just because different sermons invited different lines of questioning. However, for the majority, 13 of the 21, the priority of their audiences in one way or another arose.

³⁹⁸ Cf. ‘Concreteness in Communication,’ section A.3.4, pp. 130-138.

critical meanings. When the latter happens, ‘priority of audience’ becomes an exegetical tool and a hermeneutical issue.

S. L. Mbewe argues that biblical texts are the primary resource for appropriating the Word of God. On the one hand, this necessitates very close reading of the texts through a ‘hermeneutic of reflection’ and even ‘empathy’ in order to access the spiritual dynamics that were at play at their giving. However, this is done in the context of the Spirit of God supplying interpretations that are relevant for current audiences and are not limited to historical critical meanings.³⁹⁹

Charlton Phiri closely mirrors Mbewe. He also sees the biblical texts as the primary resource for appropriating the Word of God and holds that the Holy Spirit’s revealing activities in readers, in addition to their faith experiences, help them to enter into the spiritual experiences recorded in the Scriptures more fully, at times, even beyond what historical critical readings would reveal.⁴⁰⁰

However, whereas Mbewe sees this revealing activity as able to generate interpretations from texts that differ from day to day and occasion to occasion, Phiri merely sees it as able to reveal more fully the spiritual realities at play in the texts. In practice and in both cases, the Spirit’s revealing work supplements historical critical meanings in aid of spiritual relevance for contemporary audiences.

Kakoma also employs close reading under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit in order to enter more fully into the spiritual dynamics of the texts. He also considers the spiritual benefit of the audience as the aim of preaching. He specifically argues that the revealing immanence of the Holy Spirit is the praxis for bringing out the spirituality of the biblical texts to subsequent audiences.⁴⁰¹

For Nkhonjera, the ‘Rhema’ parallels interpretations received from the revealing work of the Holy Spirit and the ‘Logos’ is Scripture.⁴⁰² However, his elucidation of the ‘Logos’ hardly suggests serious engagement with the historical critical meanings of the biblical texts.

³⁹⁹ Pp. 93, 114. Cf. Mackwell Nyirenda’s response, p. 106.

⁴⁰⁰ Pp. 101-102.

⁴⁰¹ Pp. 102-103.

⁴⁰² P. 101.

‘Priority of audience’ for Simon Chikamata means that his rigorous commitment to historical critical exegesis is merely for yielding biblical concepts. The gist of his preaching entailed allowing the ‘Holy Spirit’ to nuance these concepts in such ways that they met the spiritual needs of the people regardless of their relationships to historical critical meanings.⁴⁰³

Among non-Pentecostal or charismatic respondents, David Mujumira understands the context and epistemological constitution of the audience to be an integral part of the exegetical task in a curious process that combines ‘seeing’ and ‘making relevant.’ He eschews separating relevance and impact from exegesis and regards this approach critical to establishing faith as the basis for thought and action in people.⁴⁰⁴

John Phiri recognizes the historical and occasional nature of the Scriptures. In addition, he regards the advent of Christ as affecting the worship of God in ways that entail discontinuity of some practices within the Bible.⁴⁰⁵ Consequently, his idea of hermeneutics amounts to the ‘spiritual cannibalisation’ of the experiences of the people of God in the Scriptures for the benefit of contemporary pilgrims.⁴⁰⁶ This may require ascribing meanings to texts from our contexts, an allegorizing of sorts.⁴⁰⁷

B.3. Uncritical Reading through Reader’s Epistemology

The data reveals examples of readings that do not engage the historical-critical meanings of biblical texts, likely a consequence of assumed similarities in epistemological constitution and socio-cultural realities between local contexts and the Bible.⁴⁰⁸ We mention them again here because they represent the third basis for substantive perceptions of the biblical material in the data. They prove the hypothesis that there are similarities in epistemological constitution and socio-cultural realities between sub-Saharan African and OT cultures by evidencing it at a naïve level.

⁴⁰³ Pp. 105-106.

⁴⁰⁴ P. 100.

⁴⁰⁵ P. 83.

⁴⁰⁶ Phiri, “Excursus XIX,” p. 13-14.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴⁰⁸ Cf. ‘Incarnating Scripture’, B.4, pp. 109-113.

The following is a summary of the worldview and epistemology in the Zambian research data.

The epistemology in the data stems from a holistic worldview in which spirit beings and human beings share the same space and the former participate in the experiences of the latter. It is also built on the foundation of experience characterised as ‘concreteness’.

At the ontological level, the experience of being human binds all humanity together as one species, therefore one society. God created all human beings. The distinction within humanity is between those who are under the dominion of God and those who are under the dominion of Satan. God’s dominion includes the Holy Spirit who is sometimes used synonymously of him. Satan’s dominion includes his vice-regents variously called demons and seducing spirits in description of their antagonistic activities towards the ‘people of God’. God is sovereign over both Satan and man. He is also superior to both in wisdom, knowledge and power. However, subjection to Satan is the default scenario of humanity while subjection to God is by choice.

The spiritual experiences of the ‘people of God’ are built on the expectation that God actively engages his people. Such engagement includes ‘revelation’. This expectation precedes and justifies both the doctrine that Scripture is revelation to past generations of the ‘people of God’ and the fact that current generations continue to receive revelation from God. As written revelation, Scripture possesses attributes related to God’s revealing acts such as ‘inspiration’ and ‘authority’. It is thus, continuous with and a yardstick for ongoing revelations in the praxis of God relating with his people. As such, biblical exegesis is the exposition of past revelation in the context of present revelation for the benefit of ‘the people of God’ today. For this reason, the people’s epistemological framework should be the *modus operandi* for the exposition of Scripture. For this reason also, historical critical study outside the praxis of revelation is inadequate for interpreting Scripture.

Present revelation also includes supernatural knowledge of needs, circumstances, spiritual witness to the authenticity of purported divine communication and consciousness of God’s presence. Salvation is a state attained in response to revelation as divine invitation to come under his dominion. This state, also known as ‘serving God’ or ‘worshipping God’ is the same for all generations of the ‘people of God’. Satan and his host have their own interaction with those under their dominion,

including revelation. The participation of spirit beings in human experience is very extensive to the point of influencing thought and volition.

Community is at the levels of shared identity and experience. The ‘people of God’ have their relationship with God in common in all generations. Local chapters of the ‘people of God’, congregations, are structured according to function. Preachers are God’s messengers, prophets or ‘seers’ in relation to the messages they receive from God to convey to the people.

Within community, the collective weight of the testimony of many validates a matter. This principle is extended to the way Scripture testifies to a teaching. A teaching that is supported by many texts demonstrates its authenticity. Similarly, there is proliferation of repeated cycles of arguments. For example, a long letter multiplies opportunities for establishing arguments from different perspectives and testimonies.

Generic concepts attain particularity in applications. In addition, the respondents interpret the biblical texts from the presupposition that imagery and figurative language permeate them. Perceived biblical typology and symbolism do not designate consistent meanings from preacher to preacher. The meanings only need to be those supplied by the Holy Spirit in a particular application of the text.

Imagery also permeates the language of communication. Such devices include figures of speech, metaphor, parable and story. In addition, concreteness or phenomenological presentation permeates the language of communication.

The biblical material is presumed to communicate indirectly and is interpreted as such. For instance, writing a letter by one’s own hand enhances its ‘force’. In addition, the respondents employ indirect communication tools. For instance, external demeanour evidences inner states.

Communication tools that require the participation of the hearer abound. For example, the question and exclamation point are versatile tools for such variegated uses as emphasizing a point, ensuring the attentiveness of the congregation and drawing the participation of the congregants into the evolution of the message.

Finally, the data intimates other possibilities for its epistemology. These include theological presuppositions and hermeneutical and homiletical theories that either are learned in theological colleges or are part of certain Christian traditions. However, these possibilities do not seem to affect epistemology significantly.

Others make 'priority of audience' an exegetical tool. Respondents in this category are the ones most likely to embrace new meanings for texts. A final category is those who ascribe local meanings to biblical texts simply because the language and culture in the texts strike a familiar cord in the local context.

Chapter 6: Select Intra-biblical Appropriations and Re-Appropriations of the Exodus Event

Background to Intra-biblical Appropriations and Re-appropriations

Introduction

The Exodus from Egypt is a foundational event in ancient Israelite religion, according to some, one of two (with the revelation of the law at Sinai) decisive themes for both Judaism and Christianity.¹ This makes the Exodus event a suitable candidate for exploring intra-biblical appropriations and re-appropriations of a tradition. We assume the Exodus narrative in BHS for the intra-biblical appropriations and re-appropriations and constantly engage with it.

Since the advent of historical criticism, the matter of theological diversity within the books of the Bible is well rehearsed. Positions on the subject range from those who dispute claims of substantial diversity and contradiction to those who argue that biblical texts were never intended to be parts of a homogenous monolith.

The former tend to explain any apparent contradictions in terms that do not encroach on unity in substance. The latter often see the canonization process that spans the period 200 BC to AD 200 as a deliberate act, initially on the part of Jewish exegetes, to achieve coherence of the biblical texts.² This process apparently involved selective embrace of works and a midrashic instinct in the task of collecting and defining the Scriptures with a view to achieving historical and theological unity.³

¹ Judah Goldin, *The Song at the Sea* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971), ix. Cf. U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1967), v and Ronald Hendel, "The Exodus in Biblical Memory," *JBL* 120, no. 4 (2001): 601.

² Vermes, 209.

³ Goldingay, *Theological Diversity*, 27.

With respect to the Exodus, divergent positions persist among scholars. Some still argue for its historicity.⁴ Others “consign [it] to the shadowy realm of folk tradition into which critical historiography cannot penetrate.”⁵

However, in the light of postmodern criticism that knowledge claims are related to the presuppositions of the scholar, critical scholarship must declare its subjectivities.⁶ Further, the grounds on which it disputes the exegetical methods by which Jews and Christians two millennia ago sought to vindicate the theological and historical unity of the Bible must be reconsidered.

In the current atmosphere, the matter of evaluating the beliefs and convictions from other social entities is complex. It includes consideration of the epistemological conventions of the judges themselves, the bases on which they judge knowledge claims from other conventions, whether knowledge is accessible across conventions, and to what extent readers from one framework can transcend their enculturation to access and evaluate knowledge in other epistemological frameworks.⁷

Such considerations must tone down the tendency in practitioners of historical criticism to decry the ‘lack of attention’ that the literary tradition of the Bible pays to the historical contexts of the traditions that it uses.⁸ Instead, it ought to expand its inquiry into the reasons for the final form of the literary tradition beyond mere redactor agendas, to the possibility of reception theory (or theories) that construe appropriation of historical events and traditions differently from the expectations of modern scholarship.

⁴ E.g. J. Bright, *A History of Israel*, 3 ed. (London: SCM Press, 1981), 118-125; and W. F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan: A Historical Analysis of Two Contrasting Faiths* (New York: Doubleday, 1968), 159-164. Cf. J. K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁵ Hendel: 602. E.g. J. M. Miller and J. H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 67-68, 78; J. A. Soggin, *An Introduction to the History of Israel and Judah*, 2 ed. (London: SCM, 1993), 26-27, 108-139.

⁶ Far from relativising episteme, such disclosure acknowledges that its scholarly activities are particular, compromised by its ‘site of enunciation’ and adheres to the ‘imperative of hermeneutical humility’. D. Batstone and others, “Introduction,” in *Liberation Theologies, Postmodernity and the Americas*, 2-3.

⁷ Cf. Barton, *Reading the Old Testament*, 26-28.

⁸ Cf. Childs, *Exodus*, 1-2.

For instance, Mendenhall sees the absence of any references to Abraham and the patriarchal complex in pre-monarchic sources as showing that they are unhistorical and were introduced in the “vast changes in ideology that attended the transition from a tribal federation to a centralised bureaucratic empire with decision-making power concentrated in the hands of the head of the state”.⁹ Absence of references to Abraham in Yahwistic sources precludes his existence prior to Jacob because Mendenhall is ascribing a comprehensiveness to the Yahwistic sources that overlooks the selectively pragmatic nature of any memory or history.

In the next two chapters, we analyse the relationships between the Exodus, the Exodus event and subsequent appropriations and re-appropriations. These analyses will be the basis for delineating the epistemology underlying these relationships with a view to determine any bearing it may have on the appropriations.

In focussing on the text without entirely overlooking the issues raised by historical criticism, we follow the example of Cassuto, who sought primarily to explain the existing text to the reader.¹⁰ We adopt this approach out of recognition of the value of historical critical inquiry in biblical scholarship but also from frustration with the speculative and inconclusive nature of attempts at reconstruction of historical traditions and circumstances.¹¹ Therefore, we will concentrate on the form and structure of the material as found in the biblical literary tradition.

Critical scholarship of the Bible has moved on since Cassuto although the tensions between approaches that ‘fragment’ texts to the detriment of synoptic perceptions and those that defend their coherence continue. These developments are generally driven by changes in the perception of the nature of the biblical texts and how to interpret them.

An example are the ‘schools’ of the 1940s and 1950s. The Albright ‘school’ sought to establish ‘what had happened’ using ‘external evidence’ and from a position of

⁹ George E. Mendenhall, “The Nature and Purpose of the Abraham Narratives,” in *Ancient Israelite Religion. Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*, ed. Jr. Patrick D. Miller, Paul D. Hanson, and S. Dean McBride (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 338-339.

¹⁰ Israel Abrahams notes of Cassuto in the Introduction, “He resists with equal determination the ‘vivisection’ of Higher Critics and the ‘plastic surgery’ of the apologists.” Cassuto, vi.

¹¹ Cf. Childs, *Exodus*, 246; Mendenhall, 337.

confidence in the historicity of the texts. The Alt 'school' sought to explore the traditions behind the texts through an analysis of the texts themselves. Cultic 'schools' sought to establish the cultic contexts of the texts, quite often against the stated meanings of the texts as construals of later redaction(s). In all three cases, reconstructing realities behind the texts is critical. In the case of the first two, this was within the framework of Wellhausenian *Literarkritik*, the documentary hypothesis. The given text of the Hebrew Bible was hardly the subject of interpretation.¹²

In reaction to approaches that undermine or ignore synchronic perceptions of Scripture, the Biblical Theology Movement argued for a 'Hebrew mindset' as the epistemological key for accessing the theological insights in the texts (as opposed to 'pure' historical research).¹³ Following largely effective criticism of this movement, the canonical approach followed, identifying final form, the canon, as "the proper place for engaging in theologically oriented exegesis".¹⁴ Its basic tenet is that "one reflects on the text as it has been received and shaped", not as reconstructed.¹⁵

Literary approaches follow in the synchronic tradition, respecting the integrity of the final form of the texts, but for literary reasons.¹⁶ It has become normal for biblical scholars to treat biblical texts according to the literary genres of its pericopes as part of their historical-grammatical analysis.¹⁷ In a further development, 'inner-biblical exegesis' "starts with the received Scripture," the "stabilized literary formulation," and explores the nature of exegesis within it.¹⁸

¹² Rolf Rendtorff, *Canon and Theology. Overtures to an Old Testament Theology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 25-26.

¹³ James Barr, "The Theological Case against Biblical Theology," in *Canon, Theology and Old Testament Interpretation*, ed. G. M. Tucker, D. L. Petersen, and R. R. Wilson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 5. The period 1930s to 1960s is often viewed as the 'golden age' of Old Testament theology. Dentan, 72.

¹⁴ R. F. Melugin, "Canon and Exegetical Method," in *Canon, Theology and Old Testament Interpretation*, 48.

¹⁵ B. S. Childs, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1985), 11.

¹⁶ "Their interest is directed to the *literary* aspects of the biblical text, to art, style, techniques, narrative strategies, and the like... Among the practitioners of these new approaches one finds scholars who obviously are not interested in the traditional methods of biblical studies." Rendtorff, 28.

¹⁷ Leland Ryken, *How to Read the Bible as Literature* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Academie Books, 1984), 9, 12-13.

¹⁸ M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford-New York: Clarendon-Oxford University Press, 1985), 7. However, Fishbane limits such activity to the Hebrew Bible, classifying

The analyses of texts below reflect developments in literary approaches to the Bible particularly in relation to the genres of biblical texts and how to interpret them.

Appendices III and VI are ‘discourse analyses’ for ‘narrative,’ i.e. Exodus 1-14 and Joshua 24, and IV, V and VII are ‘poetic analyses’ for ‘poetry,’ i.e. Song at the Sea, Ps 77 and Habakkuk 3. In the case of narrative, the structuring exposes the rhetorical features in the texts by distinguishing and highlighting the different components.¹⁹ In the case of poetry, the structuring exposes the parallelism characteristic to Hebrew narrative.²⁰ We then interpret the texts as found in the MT and in the light of relevant historical critical considerations highlighted under ‘*Sitz im Leben*’.

Below, we provide a synopsis of the Exodus narrative. We present this synopsis while fully aware that this deposit may not be the one appropriated by the texts we examine below but also mindful that memory is dynamic in keeping with what Mendenhall calls ‘the law of functional shift’.²¹

A Synopsis of the Deposit of the Exodus Tradition in the Book of Exodus

The following synopsis arises from the functional discourse analysis of Exod 1-14 in Appendix III.

The shadow of Yahweh’s providential preparation of the Exodus falls upon the nation early. Israel multiplies profusely.²² Pharaoh decrees the death of Hebrew male offspring to curtail this multiplication. However, a series of defiant actions by various people preserve Moses, the divinely appointed leader of the Exodus.

New Testament uses of the Old with the Tannaic sources (followed by the Rabbis of the Talmud) and the Quran as “three post-biblical streams of tradition which are based on the Hebrew Bible but have each transformed this *traditum* in radically diverse ways”. Fishbane, 10.

¹⁹ For these features, we are greatly indebted to Bar-Efrat’s work, *Narrative Art in the Bible*.

²⁰ For this structuring, we are indebted to Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry. A Guide to Its Techniques*, ed. David J. A. Clines and Philip R. Davies, JSOT Supplement Series 26 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).

²¹ “A formal aspect of any culture may well be continued through time, or borrowed from outside, but the new cultural context of that form of behaviour, and therefore its meaning and function, cannot be identical to the original one. It follows also that the new, contemporary context or meaning is identified as the original and authoritative one”. Mendenhall, 337. Cf. Childs, *Exodus*, xv.

²² 1:7a-f, 12a-b.

The midwives defy pharaoh's order to kill male Hebrew offspring because they fear God (אֱלֹהִים).²³ They lie to pharaoh but God is pleased.²⁴ Moses' mother hides the child for three months because she saw that he was 'comely' (טוֹב).²⁵ Pharaoh's daughter finds and has compassion on an apparently discarded Hebrew male child, Moses, and adopts him as her child, contrary to her father's orders.²⁶ However, as he grew, Moses regarded the Hebrews as his 'brothers' (אָחָיו).²⁷

Moses' flight takes him to Midian and Horeb, 'the mountain of God' (הַר הָאֱלֹהִים) where he encounters the 'angel of God' (מַלְאֲכֵי יְהוָה) in a burning bush.²⁸ The deity who speaks to him from the spectacle is at once the 'god of your fathers, the god of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob' (אֱלֹהֵי אֲבִיךָ אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב)²⁹ and Yahweh (יְהוָה).³⁰ Within the exchange, Yahweh reveals himself as also 'Yahweh the god of your fathers (אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵיכֶם)'³¹ and 'I am, I am whom I am' or 'I will be, I will be who I will be' (אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה)³². He also reveals that he appeared to their fathers as 'the Almighty' (אֵל שַׁדַּי).³³

God has 'heard' (שָׁמַע)³⁴ Israel's 'groaning' (נָאֵק)³⁵ and 'remembered' (זָכַר)³⁶ his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He has 'seen' (רָאָה)³⁷ the children of Israel and 'knows' or is 'well acquainted' (יָדַע)³⁸ with their 'sorrow' (כָּאֵב)³⁹. He has come

²³ 1:17a-d.

²⁴ 1:19a-20a.

²⁵ 2:2c-d.

²⁶ 2:5c-10f. Cf. 1:22a-d.

²⁷ 2:11c.

²⁸ 3:1c, 2a.

²⁹ 3:6b, c.

³⁰ 3:7a.

³¹ 3:15c.

³² 3:14b, e.

³³ 6:3a.

³⁴ 2:24a.

³⁵ 2:24a.

³⁶ 2:24b.

³⁷ 2:25a. Cf. 3:7a.

³⁸ 2:25b. Cf. 3:7d.

³⁹ 3:7d.

down to ‘deliver’ (Hiph., נצל)⁴⁰ his people (עמי)⁴¹ from the hand of Egypt. Moses is sent to Pharaoh to ‘bring out’ (Hiph., יצא)⁴² Yahweh’s people from Egypt. Yahweh’s presence ‘with’ Moses would make the mission possible.⁴³

This presence would manifest as Yahweh’s ‘strong hand’ (יד חזקה)⁴⁴, also called variously ‘an outstretched arm’ (זרוע נטויה)⁴⁵, ‘My hand’ (ידי)⁴⁶ and ‘the great hand’ (הַיָּד הַגְּדוֹלָה)⁴⁷. Yahweh was going to ‘send’ (שלח) his hand⁴⁸ to strike Egypt with all his ‘wonders’ (נִפְלְאוֹתָיו).⁴⁹ Therefore, we may regard all the miraculous acts of deliverance to be manifestations of Yahweh’s hand of deliverance, including the ultimate act at the Sea. Moses functions as an instrument of Yahweh’s hand. Yahweh taught him his words and actions.⁵⁰ His staff was called ‘the staff of Yahweh’ (מִטֵּה הָאֱלֹהִים)⁵¹.

An integral part of the deliverance to be wrought by the hand of Yahweh is ‘knowledge’ (ידע) of Yahweh. Israel will ‘know’ that Yahweh is the Lord their God and they are his people.⁵² This knowledge is supposed to generate faith and trust within the covenant relationship. Egypt will ‘know’ that he is Yahweh,⁵³ that there is none like Yahweh⁵⁴ and that ‘the earth’ (הָאָרֶץ) belongs to Yahweh.⁵⁵

⁴⁰ 3:8a.

⁴¹ 3:7a.

⁴² 3:10c.

⁴³ 3:12b.

⁴⁴ 3:19d. Cf. 6:1d, e; 13:3c, 9d, 14c and 16c.

⁴⁵ 6:6f.

⁴⁶ 3:20a.

⁴⁷ 14:31a.

⁴⁸ 3:20a. Cf. 9:15a.

⁴⁹ 3:20c.

⁵⁰ 4:12d, 15d-f.

⁵¹ 4:20d.

⁵² 6:6c, 7c and 8e.

⁵³ 7:17b.

⁵⁴ 8:6d. Cf. 9:14c.

⁵⁵ 9:29e.

Judging by the incredulity in pharaoh's response to Moses' initial request,⁵⁶ he did not have this knowledge. Such knowledge will lead to letting Israel go. In both cases, it is 'heeding the testimony of the signs'⁵⁷ that produces this 'knowledge', where 'knowledge' is the equivalent of 'believing' (Hiph., אָמַן)⁵⁸.

The 'knowledge' evolved in keeping with the escalation of the manifestations of Yahweh's hand.⁵⁹ Signs that the message was getting through to pharaoh's magicians include a confession following their failure to replicate the plague of the gnats⁶⁰ and succumbing to the plague of the boils.⁶¹ Pharaoh begins acknowledging Yahweh with the plague of hail.⁶² However, it is the final event at the sea that causes him to 'know' Yahweh (i.e. 'fear', יָרָא, 9:30b) to the extent where he no longer opposes him.⁶³ Israel 'trust' (אָמַן)⁶⁴, 'bow' (קָרַד)⁶⁵ and 'prostrate themselves' (Hisht., חוּה)⁶⁶ before Yahweh when they first hear his intentions. However, they stop 'listening' (שָׁמַע) to Moses at the first sign of resistance from pharaoh.⁶⁷ They only 'bow' (קָרַד) and 'worship' (Hisht., חוּה) again on the eve of the plague of the death of the first born⁶⁸ and their departure from Egypt, 'the house of bondage' (מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים).⁶⁹ It is only in the aftermath of the event at the Sea that they 'fear' (יָרָא) Yahweh⁷⁰ and 'believe' (אָמַן)⁷¹ in Yahweh and in his servant Moses again.

⁵⁶ 'Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice and let Israel go? I do not know Yahweh' (מִי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר אֶשְׁמַע בְּקוֹלוֹ לְשַׁלַּח אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֶת־יְהוָה). 5:2b-c.

⁵⁷ Lit. 'Hearing the voice of the sign' (וַיִּשְׁמָעוּ לְקוֹל הָאֵהָרָה), 4:8c, d.

⁵⁸ 4:8c, d.

⁵⁹ Thus, Yahweh established pharaoh and orchestrated his chronic vacillation to permit maximum opportunity of his declaratory acts, his 'power' (כֹּחַ), 9:16c.

⁶⁰ 8:15b.

⁶¹ 9:11a-b.

⁶² 9:27e. Cf. 8:4c, 24d; 9:28a, b.

⁶³ 14:18a-b.

⁶⁴ 4:31a.

⁶⁵ 4:31d.

⁶⁶ 4:31e.

⁶⁷ 6:9b.

⁶⁸ 12:27e.

⁶⁹ 13:3b, 14d.

⁷⁰ 14:31b.

⁷¹ 14:31c.

The aim of the analyses in this chapter is to explore the relationships between appropriation and traditions, both Israel's and others'. It is not an attempt to catalogue all possible interpretations of the texts involved. As such, we will be content with demonstrating these relationships to extents that adequately permit epistemological analysis (Chapter 7).

By 'appropriation', we mean the use of traditions for the benefit of the narrator, redactor, psalmist, prophet or any such user in the biblical literary tradition.⁷² We will assume the literary associations made in the biblical tradition except where there are compelling critical grounds to nuance them.

The Exodus event is appropriated very extensively in Scripture.⁷³ However, we limit ourselves to four texts that exploit the tradition in different contexts. Such exploitation approximates the use of Scripture in the Zambian data and facilitates comparison in use of traditions. The texts illustrate such appropriation in the Pentateuch, Writings and Prophets.⁷⁴

A. *The Song at the Sea*

Exodus 15:1-18

Modern biblical scholarship has long acknowledged that several traditions, including some attested outwith Jewish society, have been integrated and reworked into the biblical traditions and often adapted and transformed to signify new realities.⁷⁵ With this in mind, the location of the Song at the Sea in the Hebrew Bible immediately following the narrative of deliverance from Egypt makes it the first theological appropriation of the preceding narrative. Thus, Freedman supports treating the Song in the light of its biblical context in spite of his conclusion that Exodus 15 is an early

⁷² Cf. "to take sth, sb's ideas, etc. for your own use". Sally Wehmeier, ed., *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 6 ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 50.

⁷³ Cf. Goldin, ix.

⁷⁴ Exod 15:1-18; Ps 77:1-21; Josh 24:1-28; and Hab 3:1-19.

⁷⁵ Fishbane, 6-7.

pre-monarchic poem dating to the twelfth century. He is of the opinion that it is positioned where it belongs since it was correctly understood to reflect or relate to, and to fit into or run parallel with, the prose narrative in which it is embedded or to which it is attached.⁷⁶

As appropriation, it reflects the theological understanding of the congregation of Israel respecting the exodus event. We undertake this commentary while paying attention to issues pertaining to *Sitz im Leben*⁷⁷ and the critical commentary of other scholars as we judge necessary in aid of illuminating the apparent appropriation.

A.1. *Sitz im Leben* of the Song at the Sea

In seeking to establish the *Sitz im Leben* of the Song at the Sea, research into the dating of the poem does not help at all, as it remains much contested.⁷⁸ Recent research has increasingly distanced itself from the earlier dominant Wellhausenian school that held that all the psalms originated in the circles of the ‘godly’ during the period of post-exilic Judaism to include consideration of the 8th century BCE cult of Yahweh as their proper *Sitz im Leben*.⁷⁹ This is particularly important because one view is that the Song is part of the Psalms in spite of its exclusion from the Psalter.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ D. N. Freedman, “‘Who Is Like Thee among the Gods?’ the Religion of Early Israel,” in *Ancient Israelite Religion*, 316, 318. Cf. Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Psalms*, trans. David Eaton, 4 ed., 3 vols., vol. 1 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1887), 9; and Artur Weiser, *The Psalms: A Commentary* (London: SCM, 1962), 27.

⁷⁷ Literally ‘setting-in-life’. Barton, *Reading the Old Testament*, 33. *Sitz im Leben* concerns assume appropriate social settings for literary material. John H. Hayes, ed., *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*, vol. A-J (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 406, 409. Cf. Kenneth G. C. Newport, *The Sources and Sitz Im Leben of Matthew 23* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 15.

⁷⁸ Freedman, 317. Cf. D. N. Freedman, “Divine Names and Titles in Early Hebrew Poetry,” in *Magnalia Dei*, 77-80; Childs, *Exodus*, 245-248; and Frank M. Cross and D. N. Freedman, “The Song of Miriam,” *JNES* XIV, no. 4 (1955): 238-239.

⁷⁹ Weiser, 9-11.

⁸⁰ For instance, Weiser includes the Song of Deborah, the Song of Miriam, and other ‘psalms’ both within and outside the OT, to be psalms. *Ibid.*, 21.

Recent scholarship accepts the possibility that the Song and several other poems date to the pre-monarchic period.⁸¹ Day, for example, regards Canaan and not Babylon (as exemplified in the Ugaritic version), to be the immediate background of Old Testament allusions to the sea monster.⁸² Another view is that in its form in the Hebrew Bible, the Song is a collation of two hymns: vv.20-21 (an 'old hymn') and vv.1-19 (a 'relatively late piece').⁸³

Often, efforts at delineating older material from later appropriations and even reformulations, assume Gunkel's now debatable hypothesis within the *religionsgeschichtliche* approach that simpler material is earlier and earlier material is purer.⁸⁴ Thus, Wyatt excludes the presuppositions of theology in studying the biblical tradition because the material in it predates both Christian and Jewish traditions.⁸⁵ For example, that the same story is found in the poetry of Ilimilku of Ugarit and in the book of Exodus and various psalms indicates that its exegesis must be the same. The differences can be attributed to the biblical material's *long drawn out editorial process* which make it monolatrous or monotheistic.⁸⁶

The Song adheres to a poetic structure whose basic elements were among the nations of the ancient Near East. For Cassuto, this indicates that Israel learned the art of literary writing from the nations in whose midst she dwelt, particularly the Egyptians and Babylonians and Assyrians. However, she used pre-existent literary forms to express her own traditions, linguistic expressions already in use in both religious and secular life, without accepting foreign influence.⁸⁷ For this reason, both the narrative and the Song reflect and subvert the myths of contemporary cosmology. Apparently, prophets and poets in the Bible had a licence to allude to myths in the form of poetic

⁸¹ Thus, Freedman has a twelfth century date for the Song at the sea and an eleventh century date for the Song of Deborah. Freedman, "Who Is Like Thee?", 317.

⁸² John Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea. Echoes of Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 4-5.

⁸³ Martin Noth, *Exodus: A Commentary*, trans. J. S. Bowden (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1962), 121-126.

⁸⁴ Hayes, ed., 409. Cf. Carole R. Fontaine, *Traditional Sayings in the Old Testament: A Contextual Study*, Bible and Literature Series 5 (Sheffield: Almond, 1982).

⁸⁵ Wyatt, *Myths of Power*, 8, 28.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 13-14.

⁸⁷ U. Cassuto, *The Goddess Anath: Canaanite Epics of the Patriarchal Age*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1971), 20. Cf. Weiser, 23.

similes and metaphors in poetry in ways that Torah could not.⁸⁸ Several myths sharing common elements existed among the peoples of the region. Their gist is as follows.

In the cosmic beginning, the sea revolted against its creator. Rahab the prince of the sea and his allies the sea monsters rose up and exalted themselves against the will of the Creator. Names for the 'sea' include 'deep' (תְּהוֹם), 'great deep' (רָבָה תְּהוֹם), 'ocean deep' (צוּלָה), 'depth' (מְצוּלָה), 'depths' (מְצוּלוֹת), 'many waters' (מַיִם רַבִּים), 'mighty waters' (מַיִם כְּבִירִים), and 'majestic waters' (מַיִם אֲדִירִים). Sea monsters include 'Leviathan the twisting serpent,' 'the dragon' or 'dragons.' The Creator crushed the revolt using his mighty power, by his mighty arm. The Creator exterminated Rahab and his helpers, cleft the sea into two and established boundaries that it cannot pass. Then the Creator reigned and was acknowledged as king over the whole world. In the specific myths of the region, these details take on particular identities and narrative lines.⁸⁹ In Israel's 'version' or 'adaptation,' what Cassuto calls an 'epic poem,' the sea revolts against its Creator.⁹⁰

Wyatt views the presence of common mythical language in both societies as pointing to the fact that Ugaritic (Canaanite) and biblical (Israel) myths belong to the same cultural continuum.⁹¹ One of two main myths that are "important and constantly reworked in the biblical tradition" is "the *Chaoskampf*, the first fight between a god, usually the storm-god, and the dragon chaos, often identifiable with the sea-god", Yam.⁹²

The myth predates the Ugaritic version by some centuries.⁹³ The following is the climax of the present form of the *Chaoskampf* narrative at Ugarit. Yam receives his royal authority. Baal has become Yam's prisoner and cowers beneath the throne.

⁸⁸ Cassuto, *Exodus*, 179, 180.

⁸⁹ These include the Babylonian story about the war of Marduk against Tiamat, or, in Ugaritic texts, Baal the god of heaven against Mot the god of Sheol and against the latter's confederates, the Prince of the Sea and the Judge of the River and his other helpers. *Ibid.*, 178-179.

⁹⁰ Cassuto sees many allusions to this myth in the prophetic and poetic literature of the Bible and in the pseudepigrapha and rabbinic legends. *Ibid.*, 178.

⁹¹ "The cognate nature of the languages of the two cultures, language being the vehicle of all mythical and symbolic thinking, made a commonality of cosmological presuppositions inevitable." Wyatt, *Myths of Power*, 29.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 122, 158.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 123.

Urged on by Kothar and Hasis, Baal strikes Prince Yam with two maces. The first one strikes his trunk. The second one strikes his head. Yam collapses, his joints tremble. Baal dries up and drinks Prince Yam to the dregs. Yam is then a prisoner.⁹⁴ However, Wyatt admits that the “Hebrew Bible applies the myth in a different way, and understands a distinct meaning in it”.⁹⁵

Day suggests such application in the use of the Song in Exodus. Egypt is equated to Rahab by analogical extension because of Egypt’s oppressive role towards Israel (Exod 14) and the context of the sea.⁹⁶

There is no conflict with the waters, nor do the waters symbolize a foreign nation or nations; rather, Yahweh’s victory at Yam Suph is over pharaoh and his armies, and the waters...are merely the passive instrument used by Yahweh in accomplishing his purpose.⁹⁷

Whatever its prehistory, for the following analysis we will adopt its textual context in the book of Exodus as its life setting: a celebration of the deliverance at the sea as narrated in Exodus 14.

A.2. Analytical Commentary

The Song is essentially a praise song couched in concrete expressions.⁹⁸ Westermann notes that psalms of praise assume a community, an audience. They have an inbuilt hyperbolic element. The subject of praise is “elevated (*magnificare*)”. They have

⁹⁴ From Wyatt’s translation of KTU 1.2 iv 7-21. Ibid., 135-138. Cf. M. S. Smith, “The Baal Cycle,” in *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, ed. S. B. Parker, Society of Biblical Literature. Writings from the Ancient World Series (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 104.

⁹⁵ Wyatt, *Myths of Power*, 159, 160. Smith argues that the cosmic battle used in the first section of the Baal cycle is exploited politically at Mari to express divine support for the monarchy and suspects that its presence at Ugarit may also have been for political use. Smith, “Baal Cycle,” 84.

⁹⁶ Day, 88-89, 96.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 98.

⁹⁸ Westermann ascribes this concreteness to the primitiveness of linguistic formations and their deficiencies in secondary differentiation of meanings. Claus Westermann, *Praise and Lament in the Psalms*, trans. Keith R. Crim and Richard N. Soulen (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981), 25-26.

spontaneity and an element of joy, an exclamatory aspect to them. As such, direct address is to be expected.⁹⁹

He suggests that the primary goal of descriptive aspects of psalms of praise is to extol Yahweh as opposed to remembrance of the facts of history i.e. re-representing ('traditioning') past historical facts in order to "re-present" the One who is the active Lord of history in order to secure faith in future generations.¹⁰⁰ In the following analysis, we assume that every representation is related to historical events. The commentary follows the poetic analysis in Appendix IV.

15:1

The protagonists are 'Moses and the sons of Israel' (מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, 1A), the entire congregation of Israel.¹⁰¹ 'Then' (אָז) makes it a consequential celebratory song for the victory preceding.¹⁰² Yahweh had triumphed. The collective identity of the protagonists also suggests unanimity in their interpretation of acts of deliverance.¹⁰³

According to the narrative, this song corresponds with the attainment of 'knowledge' (יָדַעַת) as evidenced by the conflation of 'bowing' (קָדַר), 'worshipping' (Hiph., חָוָה), 'fear' (יָרָא) and 'believing' (אָמֵן).¹⁰⁴ Most likely, therefore, the expressions of faith in the Song reflect relief and gratitude for the finality of deliverance from the threat of Pharaoh by the hand of Yahweh.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 27-28.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 236-238.

¹⁰¹ However, Propp would limit the subject to 'men' alone because Semitic people (Arab and Jewish) segregate between the sexes in celebration. William H. C. Propp, *Exodus 1-18: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 508. Often, this view rests on understanding Exodus 15:1-19 as belonging to a different tradition from vv. 20-21. Cassuto's 'children of Israel', suggests that there is no warrant here to read 'sons' (בְּנֵי) in an exclusive sense. Cassuto, *Exodus*, 173.

¹⁰² Cf. Cassuto, *Exodus*, 173.

¹⁰³ Cf. Propp, 508.

¹⁰⁴ 5:20-21; 6:12b; 14:10-12.

First person singular verbs and pronominal suffixes¹⁰⁵ reflect the fluidness of identity between the individual and the community in the adoption of a collective singular. While this could be purely grammatical,¹⁰⁶ the agreement in perception suggested above could also explain the use of the singular.

The same fluidness is apparent in the perpetuation of first person singular pronouns in the Song.¹⁰⁷ This also suggests that collectively shared positions are also personal.

‘For he is surely exalted’ (בִּי־נָאָה נָאָה, C₁) encapsulates the theological point in the narrative. God’s triumph over the armies of pharaoh evidenced his exalted status.¹⁰⁸ The Exodus event is the empirical evidence that preceded and occasioned faith in Israel.

15:2

‘This’ (זֶה, B₁, also understood in B₂) makes 15:2 an extension of Israel’s faith in Yahweh (here הוּא)¹⁰⁹ affirmed in A₁ and A₂. B₂ acknowledges the fact that this relationship of faith is continuous with previous generations. The narrative supports this.¹¹⁰

‘My father’ (אָבִי, B₂), a collective singular, refers to ‘ancestors’ several generations removed from the current stock of Israelites.¹¹¹ This illustrates the semantic

¹⁰⁵ ‘I will sing’ (אֶשְׁיָרָה) 15:1; ‘my song’ (עֲנִי), ‘and he will be my’ (וְהָיִלִי), ‘this is my God and I will praise him, the God of my father and I will exalt him’ (זֶה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֲנִיָּהּ אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי וְאֶרְמְמֶנָּהּ) 15:2.

¹⁰⁶ “When more than one noun is named as subject, the verb may be plural or singular (agreeing with the first noun).” Seow, 151.

¹⁰⁷ The LXX, Vulgate, Targums, and Syriac Bible have “we” understanding a plural verb. Thus for Propp, the singular verb in the MT either indicates an adaptation of the text to liturgical use – so also J. W. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus*, Society of Biblical Literature. Septuagint and Cognate Studies 30 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 227. – or a linguistic adaptation to the narrative context, in which the men sing together, apparently “yet another case of the ancient translations pluralizing a Hebrew collective singular.” Propp, 470. For Childs, it is a stylistic feature. Childs, *Exodus*, 250.

¹⁰⁸ This clear in the predicate ‘horse and rider he has cast into the sea’ (סוס וְרֶכֶבּוֹ הֵמָּה בָּיָם) . 15:1. Note the parallel reduction of the hosts of Egypt to one horse and its rider.

¹⁰⁹ For other biblical texts that use הוּא interchangeably with הָיָה see 17:16; Ps 89:9; 104:35; 106:48; 111:1; 112:1; 113:1; and Isa 12:2.

¹¹⁰ Israel is עַמִּי. 3:7. Cf. 3:6.

¹¹¹ Cf. 3:6 – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (אֲבִרְךָ אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב).

flexibility of ‘father’. ‘The Lord is my strength and my song’ (עַי וְזִמְרָת יְהוָה, A₁) is verb-less implying present and abiding theological conviction.¹¹² ‘And he has become my salvation’ (וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה, A₂) illustrates this. The generic (faith) is evidenced by the particular (salvation).

However, Israel’s faith in the narrative is not generic. A brief review reveals that only the midwives evidenced reverence for God.

‘Fear of God’ (הֵאֱלֹהִים) is the motive for their refusal to obey pharaoh’s directives.¹¹³ In contrast, Moses’ mother preserves him because of his looks.¹¹⁴ However, ‘good’ (טוֹב) without a qualifier suggesting ‘appearance’ (as it does in 1 Sam 9:2) can indicate conceptual goodness, in this case, Moses’ future role as God’s deliverer. There are numerous instances of ‘abstract’ uses of טוֹב in the Bible.¹¹⁵ Therefore, טוב here may refer to physical beauty or something bordering on a prophetic awareness of the significance of the child in later life.

Moses avenged a Hebrew man and intervened between two feuding Hebrew men based on shared kinship with the Hebrews.¹¹⁶ Israel’s ‘sighs’ and ‘cries’ apparently ascend to God because of God’s covenant with their fathers. They do not ‘sigh’ or ‘cry out’ to him.¹¹⁷

Moses journeys to ‘the mountain of God’ (הַר הָאֱלֹהִים) in the course of shepherding, not by special design.¹¹⁸ The angel of Yahweh’s self-introduction is a first for an

¹¹² Cf. Seow, 72.

¹¹³ 1:17, 21a. Note that they did not reject pharaoh’s orders to his face but in an implicit manner. They offer a rationale that is plausible enough to avert retribution yet suspicious enough to lead pharaoh to direct other people to carry out the task of killing male Hebrew infants. 1:19b-d. However, their nationality may have a bearing on their faith in God. Childs, *Exodus*, 16.

¹¹⁴ In this regard, the NASB translates טוב to mean “beautiful.” 2:2c. Childs also sees her motive for preserving the child to be “intimate and subjective”. Ibid., 18.

¹¹⁵ For example, Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31 (creation); 40:16 (interpretation); Exod 18:17 (practice or conduct). By contrast, ‘handsome’ or ‘fair’ or ‘beautiful’ (יָפֵה) does not lend itself to such ambiguity. E.g. Gen 39:6 (Joseph); 1 Sam 16:12; 17:42 (David); and 2 Sam 14:25 (Absalom).

¹¹⁶ 2:11c. Cf. ‘an Egyptian man’ (אִישׁ מִצְרַיִם, 2:11e), with ‘a Hebrew man from his brothers’ (אִישׁ־עִבְרִי מֵאֶחָיו, 2:11f).

¹¹⁷ 2:23d. Cf. 2:23e-25b.

¹¹⁸ 3:1. Cf. Childs, *Exodus*, 72.

apparently hitherto uninitiated Moses. However, covering his face conceivably suggests some awareness of the traditions of his ancestors.¹¹⁹

His reluctance to lead the sons of Israel out of Egypt¹²⁰ and his inquiry into the name of God¹²¹ also suggest unfamiliarity with Yahweh. Off course, this reluctance could signify humility, particularly when contrasted with his earlier tendencies to intervene.¹²² However, in the face of explicit orders from God, it approximates unbelief as Yahweh's anger with him also indicates.¹²³ He hides his reluctance behind the 'anticipated' reaction of the children of Israel and persists even after God has rehearsed 'the signs' (תַּאֲתוֹת) ¹²⁴ that would address that concern.

The elders stumble at the first sign of resistance by pharaoh¹²⁵ and only recover following the event at the Sea.¹²⁶ Thus, the 'voice of the signs'¹²⁷ appears to have been as much for pharaoh and Egypt to 'know' (יָדַע) ¹²⁸ that Yahweh was Lord as it was for Israel.¹²⁹

On the evidence, therefore, the 'signs' induct Israel into the 'knowledge' of Yahweh within the covenant relationship that existed between Yahweh and their 'fathers'.

עַי וְזִמְרָת יְהוָה indicates that the 'signs' had achieved their purpose.

¹¹⁹ In the Bible, looking upon the face of God was apparently something to be avoided for theological reasons. Gen 32:30; Exod 19:21; 33:20; 1 Sam 6:19; Isa 6:5. However, Childs sees this as cowering before "the astonishing elements of the awe-inspiring theophany" before him. He sees no part for previous faith in this encounter. Ibid., 73. Cf. Rad, *Old Testament Theology* 2, 57.

¹²⁰ 3:11a-4:14a. Admittedly, "Who am I that I should go to pharaoh and that I should bring out the children of Israel from Egypt?" (3:11a, b) focuses on Moses himself and his standing before pharaoh. But it can also be said that in failing to see God in the equation, Moses is demonstrating his lack of trust in God, the very עַי וְזִמְרָת יְהוָה celebrated in Exod 15:2.

¹²¹ 3:13a-16f.

¹²² Exod 2:11-14. Cf. Cassuto, *Exodus*, 48-50.

¹²³ 4:14a.

¹²⁴ 4:9b. Cf. Childs, *Exodus*, 76, 77, 78-80.

¹²⁵ P. 124-125. Cf. 4:29-31 with 5:20-21.

¹²⁶ 12:27e, 14:31c.

¹²⁷ 4:8c, d.

¹²⁸ 7:5, 17; 8:6, 15, 24; 9:14, 15-16; 10:16; 14:18. "By this you will know that I am the Lord" (בְּזֹאת תֵּדָע כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה) seems to be the definitive rationale for the successive punitive 'signs.' E.g. Exod 5:2. "Who is *Yahweh* that I should obey his voice?" (מִי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר אֶשְׁמַע בְּקוֹלוֹ). Cf. Exod 9:16, 30; 11:9.

¹²⁹ 10:2c.

Alternatively, this early after the penultimate redemptive event, the generic nature of *עַי וְזִמְרָה יָהּ* indicates that Moses and Israel were confessing the permanence of Yahweh's majesty and succour for the ages to follow. If so, this song anticipates a covenantal relationship with God. In the words of an early reader of the Mekilta,¹³⁰ "God was Israel's salvation in the past, and that He will be again."¹³¹

15:3

Having affirmed the covenant (Exod 15:2, B₁), the 'singer' celebrates the act of salvation. The 'knowledge' gained is that 'Yahweh is a man of war'. This 'knowledge' is celebrated in the ensuing detailed recount of the 'act of war,' ostensibly informed by the Exodus narrative. However, as the discussion of the possible prehistory of some of the material suggests, this is an adaptation of earlier material.

15:4

A₁ is theological interpretation. Yahweh overthrows pharaoh's chariots and army. A₂ is the 'un-interpreted' event at the Sea. In addition, A₂ highlights the fact that these were the elite troops of pharaoh. Taken together, the picture is that circumstance is Yahweh's activity. The event at the sea was not arbitrary. The forces of nature¹³² are Yahweh's weapons of war. Even the Egyptians hold these associations.¹³³

Yahweh's opposition is Egypt and pharaoh with a passive sea in an adaptation of *Chaoskampf*. Pharaoh's military (4A₁, A₂), not Yam, is the enemy shattered in 5B below. Since the details of pharaoh's arsenal and manpower in the narrative re-

¹³⁰ The Mekilta (Lit. 'Treatise on interpretation') is a composite work devoted to the book of Exodus. It contains interpretations and views of the rabbis, the Tannaim, including the earliest extant and complete commentary on the Song at the Sea, the Shirta (lit. 'The Song'). Goldin, x, 4.

¹³¹ Ibid. Cf. D. Hoffmann, ed., *Midrash Tannaim* (Berlin: 1909).

¹³² Exod 14:21-28.

¹³³ Exod 14:25e.

appear here,¹³⁴ this aspect of the Song should be understood as ‘poetic narrative’. Nevertheless, the interpretation is theological.¹³⁵

15:5

The ‘deep’ (תְּהוֹמוֹת, 5A) is personified and is a weapon in God’s hand.¹³⁶ As subject, ‘deep’ (תְּהוֹמוֹת), Exod 15:5 A, replaces the object ‘sea’ (יָם) – Exod 15:4A₂. Therefore, its subject status may be the basis for its personification. However, תְּהוֹמוֹת evokes Yam in the *Chaoskampf*.¹³⁷ B also nuances 15:4 A₂ in that passive ‘they sunk’ (טָבְעוּ, 4 A₂) has become active ‘they went down’ (נָרְדוּ, 5B). ‘In the sea of reeds’ (בְּיַם-סוּף, 4A₂) becomes ‘in the depths’ (בְּמַצּוֹלָה, 5B).

The poetry in the song moves from the general to the specific: Declarative verse leads to covenant affirmation that in turn leads to the affirmation of God’s character as a warrior. This is followed by poetic description of the manifestation of this character in the event at the Red Sea. Since תְּהוֹמוֹת and מַצּוֹלָה are variants of ‘the sea’ in the cosmic myths of the region,¹³⁸ we may understand 15:5 as a recasting in mythical language of 15:4.

15:6

The ‘right hand’ is often associated with acts of divine power¹³⁹ and this is its symbolism here. This verse is declaration of the militancy of Yahweh according to

¹³⁴ The narrative: ‘choice chariot’ (רֶכֶב בְּחֹיֹר) – 14:7a, c, ‘his horsemen and his army [troops]’ (וּפָרָשָׁיו וְחֵילוֹ) – 14:9c; The song: ‘the chariots of pharaoh and his army [troops]’ (מִרֶכֶב בַּחֲרֹת פָּרְעֹה וְחֵילוֹ), ‘and his choice officers’ (וּמַבְחָרָיו שְׁלֵשִׁי) – 15:4A₁, A₂.

¹³⁵ Cf. Exod 14:14.

¹³⁶ Cf. תְּהוֹמוֹת in Exod 15:5; Job 28:14; 38:16; Ps 42:7; 77:17; 148:7; Hab 3:10. However, it is used here as the ‘depths of the seas.’ Cf. Gen 1:2; 49:25; Prov 3:20; 8:24, 27; Isa 51:10; 63:13. Thus, Cross and Freedman note that “the sea is never personified and is the ‘passive’ tool of Yahweh responding to his bidding.” Cross and Freedman: 239.

¹³⁷ Cf. p. 160.

¹³⁸ Cf. p. 160.

¹³⁹ Exod 15:12; Ps 21:9; 44:4; 60:7. Cf. Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman, eds., 727-728.

the pattern established above. Declaration ensues into explicit celebrations of the event. Praise heightens with particularity of action and the shift from the 3.m.s to the 2.m.s (ך) in the pronominal suffixes when the singers refer to Yahweh.

15:7

15:7A signals the shift intimated above and the ‘right hand’ of Yahweh, here the ‘greatness of his excellence’ (כְּרֵב גְּאוּנָךְ), overthrows those who rise up against Yahweh. Particularity in referring to Yahweh continues in the 2.m.s verbal forms (תַּשְׁלַח, תַּהַרֵם) and pronominal suffixes (ך). However, this time, the ‘right hand’ is commissioned and consuming ‘anger’, is personified and is an acting subject. The language of praise in 7B and C transcends any vestiges of the event at the sea.

A metaphor from fire depicts Yahweh’s fury and total destruction of pharaoh and his army.¹⁴⁰ Therefore, ‘hand’ is re-cast as ‘God’s excellence’ and ‘anger’. In short, any action or emotion associated with God’s ‘war’ against Egypt fits into the symbolism of ‘hand.’ Thus, ‘by the blast of your nostrils’ (וּבְרוּחַ אֲפִידֶךָ) in 15:8, presumably a poetic and metaphoric reference to east winds,¹⁴¹ is also an expression of Yahweh’s ‘hand.’

15:8

As noted above, ‘right hand’ is depicted here as the effect of the ‘east winds’ (קָדִים רוח) ¹⁴² on the sea, the ‘blast of his nostrils’ (רוח אֲפִידֶךָ, A).¹⁴³ The result, the waters are ‘heaped up’, is recast in 15:8B₁ in language that captures the action as it happened: the flowing water stands in a heap. 15:8B₂ goes a step further and evokes the

¹⁴⁰ Cf. 14:13d-e, 17d-18b.

¹⁴¹ 14:21b.

¹⁴² Exod 14:21b.

¹⁴³ ‘Anger’ (חַרֹן) in Exod 15:7 is the abstract equivalent of the graphic ‘anger’ (אָפ). Its use here with רוח to mean ‘nose’ or ‘nostrils’ is thus very graphic. The consonants חרן represent a more abstract rendering of the same concept in the sense that they embody the idea of “burning” with anger, hence the emotional aspect of anger. BDB, 354.

language of *Chaoskampf*. ‘The waters’ (מים, 8A) have become תהומות that ‘congeals’ at the heart of the ‘sea’ (ים) perhaps a reference to a stricken Yam.¹⁴⁴

15:9-10

This text is a continuation of 15:8 because it perpetuates the poetic and dramatic re-enactment of the final encounter between Pharaoh and Yahweh. B-G re-enacts the progressive thinking of the collective enemy in poetic description. H-I re-enacts the response of Yahweh. Accordingly, there are only two protagonists in this conflict: the enemy and Yahweh. I-J is a refrain of 15:5A and B, perhaps marking the end of elements in the poetic narrative that evoke *Chaoskampf*.¹⁴⁵ If so, the height of poetic expression (echoes of *Chaoskampf*) appears when ‘describing’ the triumph par excellence, the final conflict.

15:11

The drama above underscores the uniqueness¹⁴⁶ and majesty¹⁴⁷ of Yahweh ‘among the gods’, suggesting a polytheistic context.¹⁴⁸ The order is important since, in this song, the triumph is the basis for the praise and expressions of faith. The Song is thus both a theological appropriation of the Exodus and a song of praise, worship and thanksgiving to Yahweh.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Wyatt’s summary of the Ugarit version of *Chaoskampf* on pp. 160-161.

¹⁴⁵ Note that ים, 10J, is yet another of Cassuto’s variants of ‘the sea’. Cf. p. 160.

¹⁴⁶ This is evident in the rhetorical “who?” that frames this verse.

¹⁴⁷ אדר. Cf. 15:6A.

¹⁴⁸ בָּאֱלֹהִים, 11 A. Cf. John Barton, “The Messiah in Old Testament Theology,” in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*, ed. John Day, JSOT Supplement Series (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 371.

¹⁴⁹ Exod 15:1; and especially the 2.m.s. pronominal suffixes and the 2.m.s. verbs in Exod 15:6, 7, 8, 10-13. According to Westermann, thanksgiving is ‘hidden in praise in Hebrew thought’. Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 25.

15:12-13

These verses extend Yahweh's action beyond the Exodus event. Notably, the one 'extending' (נָטָה) his arm in the narrative is Moses at God's command.¹⁵⁰ The implication is that his action is an expression of God's action.¹⁵¹ However, either its outcome (B-D) is a nuance of 'drowning' i.e. 'swallowing' by the earth or this is a cue within the song for subsequent prophetic interpretations.¹⁵²

We do not encounter 'the earth swallowing up' (תִּבְלַעְמוּ אֶרֶץ, B) the enemies of Yahweh until the incident with the children of Korah.¹⁵³ This also suggests that the guidance in 15:13 C-D refers to later biblical narratives although the Exodus narrative has instances of specific divine guidance,¹⁵⁴ and a destination (15:13D) was part of the promise to Moses.¹⁵⁵ However, some scholars associate 'earth' (אֶרֶץ) in B with the 'sea'.¹⁵⁶ If so, Sinai is a strong possibility for 'holy habitation', D, according to the promises in Exod 3:12.¹⁵⁷ Grammatical and syntactical congruencies¹⁵⁸ strengthen further the argument for reading A-B together with C-D.

15:14-15

Report of the Exodus event precedes the advance of the children of Israel and causes panic among the nations that are in their path of advance. Details of the report are left to the imagination of the reader.¹⁵⁹ We could interpret the verbs futuristically or

¹⁵⁰ 14:26a.

¹⁵¹ Cf. Cassuto, *Exodus*, 176; Propp, 529 with Exod 7:1 and 14:16.

¹⁵² Cf. Goldin, 23.

¹⁵³ Num 16:30, 32; 26:10.

¹⁵⁴ 13:17-18, 21-22; 14:1-3.

¹⁵⁵ Exod 3:8, 17; 13:5. Cf. Childs, *Exodus*, 243; and D. N. Freedman, *Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1980), 214.

¹⁵⁶ For instance, Cassuto understands אֶרֶץ to signify 'sheol,' the underworld, with parallels of such usage in Akkadian and Ugaritic. Cassuto, *Exodus*, 176. Cf. Propp, 530.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Cassuto, *Exodus*, 176; B. Jacob, *The Second Book of the Bible: Exodus*, trans. W. Jacob (Hoboken, N.J.: KTAV, 1992), 421; and Freedman, *Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy*, 136-140.

¹⁵⁸ These include the use of the verbal forms that start with נ (נָטָה, נָחִיף, נִהַלֵּף), 2.m.s.verbs (the previous three and נִצָּלֵף) and 2.m.s. pronominal object suffixes (יָמִינֶךָ, בְּחִסְדֶּךָ, בְּעֶזְרֶךָ).

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Josh 2:9.

historically and each premise has consequences.¹⁶⁰ However, it is quite clear that ‘hearing’ follows the Exodus event.

15:16

As above, C-D could refer to later narratives, presumably the conquest of Canaan, while A-B refers to the Exodus event.

15:17

The debate about the way to translate the verbs notwithstanding, the children of Israel are now the ‘people’ (עַם) of Yahweh and participants in the promises of land, Canaan. They are now aware of their progress and inheritance.

The above pericopes are unusual in the clarity of vision that Israel evidence with respect to their destiny and this has led to speculation that the Song is a late composition.¹⁶¹ For instance, while Mount Horeb is called ‘the mountain of God’ (הַר הָאֱלֹהִים),¹⁶² and therefore a candidate for ‘a place for your dwelling’ (מִכּוֹן לְשִׁבְתְּךָ, F), ‘dwelling’ and ‘inheritance’ (E) for Israel are associated with the land of Canaan.¹⁶³

For Day, this material suggests other traditions. Victory at the sea ensuing in an eternal reign (15:18A) evokes how Baal’s victory over Yam issued in the building of a temple suggesting that this supposedly later part of the poem belongs with the supposedly earlier, part.¹⁶⁴ However, since Ugaritic parallels feature in both early

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Childs, *Exodus*, 242; and Cross and Freedman: 240.

¹⁶¹ Cf. 3:7-8; 16-17. However, Cassuto points out that the “Israelites intended, even before entering the land, to build therein a sanctuary to the Lord their God.” Cassuto, *Exodus*, 177.

¹⁶² 3:1.

¹⁶³ Num 33:54; Deut 4:21, 38; 12:9; 20:16; 26:1; Josh 24:28. Mt. Zion is explicitly designated as both the inheritance and dwelling of Yahweh. Ps 74:2.

¹⁶⁴ “The expressions used of Yahweh’s dwelling in v. 17...are indeed so similar to those used of Baal and other gods in the Ugaritic texts that there can be no doubt that they were derived from the Canaanites. This has been used as an argument in favour of a very early dating of Ex. 15...and against seeing here a reference to Mt Zion.” Day, 98-99.

and later parts of the Old Testament,¹⁶⁵ we should not find it surprising that echoes of language originally used of Baal's dwelling are also applied to Jerusalem. Therefore, 'the mountain of your inheritance' (הַר יְנִיחָהָךְ, 17 E), 'a place of your dwelling' (מְכוֹן לְשִׁבְתָּךְ, 17F) and 'a sanctuary' (מִקְדָּשׁ, 17G) refer to Jerusalem.¹⁶⁶ This is consistent with his view that "the description [of the poem] has been shaped and influenced by motifs deriving from the myth of the divine conflict with the waters".¹⁶⁷

15:18, 19

15:18 belongs with the above in its clarity of vision within covenant, genre as Song, and as the penultimate theological declaration of the reign of Yahweh celebrated in the Song.¹⁶⁸ However, 5:19 is the *raison d'être* for the Song and demands to be related to it.

We have in 15:19 what Westermann calls a 're-representation of history in descriptive praise' aimed at accentuating Yahweh's majesty (against opponents) and grace (towards his people).¹⁶⁹ This suggests that song is a genre for the expression of intense emotions including relief, gratitude, elation and joy. It lends itself, for instance, to gloating. Direct address implies awareness that Yahweh is present and is their audience. For this reason, treating its language literally is quite misleading. Song, here, is a community event.¹⁷⁰ As such, it is fitting that music and dance, characteristically led by women¹⁷¹ is part of the event.

¹⁶⁵ For Smith, they extend to the NT and extra-biblical traditions. Smith, "Baal Cycle," 85-86.

¹⁶⁶ Day, 98-100. Cf. R. E. Clements, *God and Temple* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1965), 53-54.

¹⁶⁷ Day, 98.

¹⁶⁸ For this reason, Cassuto, for instance, concludes his commentary on the Song at verse 18 and regards vv. 19-21 to be the final portion of the framework of the Song. Cassuto, *Exodus*, 177, 181.

¹⁶⁹ Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 235.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. p. 161.

¹⁷¹ Here, we apparently have a "postbattle victory celebration, usually led by women meeting returning warriors." Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman, eds., 188. Some see v.21 as belonging to a superior tradition (E?) that associates the song with Miriam as opposed to Moses. Cross and

The commentary above suggests the following. The Exodus event was based on God's covenantal obligations to Israel. It was the ultimate act in a series of acts of the 'right hand of Yahweh' sent to deliver Israel from Egypt and, in so doing, to 'instruct' (ידע) Israel and Egypt concerning Yahweh. The event engendered 'knowledge' of Yahweh for this generation of the 'people' of God¹⁷² and reinforced their continuity with the 'fathers' in relation to covenant with Yahweh.

The Song is thus, both a declaration of this newly found awareness and a celebration of the immediate event.¹⁷³ Its poetic expression employs the language of *Chaoskampf*. The compiler seemingly used material from various traditions both later (conquest of Canaan?) and earlier (*Chaoskampf*), to establish a response to the event at the Sea and at the sea for the congregation of Israel.

B. A psalm of Asaph

Psalm 77:1-21

B.1. *Sitz im Leben* of Psalm 77

We have already alluded to shifting trends in the dating of psalms above and the possibility of the 8th century Ephraimite tradition as the *Sitz im Leben* of at least some of the psalms.¹⁷⁴ For psalms 'to Asaph' (לְאַסָּף),¹⁷⁵ possibilities include a Davidic

Freedman: 237-8. For Delitzsch, v. 21 indicates that Miriam along with the women answers the choir of men (לְכָל) in an alternating song. Delitzsch, 41.

¹⁷² Cf. Cross and Freedman: 237, note f., and Hendel: 601.

¹⁷³ According to Cassuto, the Song is an 'Ode of Triumph' following the narrative of the Exodus. It is divisible into three strophes (vv. 1-6; 7-11; 12-16) and an epilogue (vv. 17-18). At the end of each strophe certain words are repeated to mark the conclusion (*Thy right hand, O Lord – Thy right hand, O Lord* in v. 6; *Who is like Thee? – Who is like Thee?* In v. 11; *till ...pass by – till...pass by* in v. 16). Each repetition is preceded by a simile (v. 5: *like a stone*; v.10: *as lead*; v. 16; *as a stone*). The first strophe serves as general introduction, the second describes in detail the event alluded to in passing in the first strophe, and the third describes the consequences of the event. The epilogue directs our gaze to the distant outcome in the future. Cassuto, *Exodus*, 173, 175, 176, 177.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. pp. 158-161.

¹⁷⁵ Ps 50, 73-83.

Asaph, perhaps David's musician,¹⁷⁶ a post-exilic Asaph guild of Second Temple singers¹⁷⁷ and dismissal of any significance for the superscription.¹⁷⁸ Others argue for an early and northern (8th century) origin for the material but a later adaptation for use in the south.¹⁷⁹

The reason for this diversity is the so-called Delitzsch's dilemma.¹⁸⁰ Delitzsch noted that the Asaph of David's time could not possibly be the author of all the psalms bearing his superscription. Ps 78:69 assumes the reign of Solomon. In addition, Asaphites are present in Scripture under Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:14; cf. 3:10; Neh 7:44 cf. 11:22). Therefore, the superscription could indicate a host of referents, including people living in post-exilic times.¹⁸¹

Commentators have generally offered two contrasting resolutions. The majority favour "minimizing Delitzsch's points in common, and attending to the variant dates and classifications". Generally, this has meant "regarding the Asaph heading as insignificant."¹⁸² The assumption is often that the material itself (*traditum*) should suggest and justify seeing the Asaphic psalms belonging together as opposed to an ascription.

A minority yet persistent view continues to see the superscription as critical to perceiving the material together.¹⁸³ This group includes both those who see

¹⁷⁶ 1 Chr 23:2-5, 25. Cf. 1 Chr 15:16-22.

¹⁷⁷ Michael D. Goulder, *The Psalms of Asaph and the Pentateuch: Studies in the Psalter*, 3, ed. David J. A. Clines and Philip Davies, JSOT Supplement Series 233 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 16., citing Gunkel and Begrich's work of 1933. Cf. Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas, 2 vols., vol. 2 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), 79-82.

¹⁷⁸ E.g. Mitchell S. J. Dahood, *Psalms II, 50-100*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1968); Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Worship in Israel: A Cultic History of the Old Testament*, trans. Geoffrey Buswell (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966); M. E. Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 20 (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990); and Charles A. Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1906), xvi.

¹⁷⁹ Goulder, 16. Cf. Claus Westermann, *The Psalms: Structure, Content & Message*, trans. Ralph D. Gehrke (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1980), 12; Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1-59: A Commentary*, trans. Hilton C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988), 21-32; and A. F. Kirkpatrick, *The Book of Psalms*, 3 vols., Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, vol. 1 (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1891-1901), xxxiii.

¹⁸⁰ Goulder, 15-36.

¹⁸¹ Delitzsch, 142-143.

¹⁸² Goulder, 15.

¹⁸³ "The superscriptions appear to provide a form of external control which groups together otherwise apparently disparate materials under a single *traditio* (group responsible for them)... Thus, the psalms which make up the Asaphite collection should yield information about the *traditio* responsible for

commonality in the Asaphic psalms at the level of *traditum* and see the account of the chronicler as essentially validating this¹⁸⁴ and those who do not see common content in the *traditum* but still understand the material as belonging together based on other considerations.¹⁸⁵

Inquiry into the authorship of individual psalms is perilous and tentative at best. The exegesis of individual psalms does not guarantee resolution of the dates when they came into existence because many psalms “are formulated to serve as types and are remote from the actual historical situation of their time”.¹⁸⁶

According to Westermann, the proliferation of the genre ‘lament’ in disparate material both preceding and superseding the 8th century cult is evidence that “lament is a phenomenon of human existence which received its special...character in the cult, but which...extends beyond it”.¹⁸⁷ Like the psalm of praise, lament is an event and presupposes other people besides the addressee and the speaker.¹⁸⁸ The lament itself has three basic components: “God, the one who laments, and the enemy”.¹⁸⁹ Lament included in a psalm, as here, belongs to the middle tradition of lament, the cult, as its *Sitz im Leben*¹⁹⁰ although, being an individual psalm of lament, it has no historical point of reference.¹⁹¹

Westermann complains about the focus on *Sitz im Leben* as the basis for understanding the psalms at the expense of “understanding the categories of the psalms as a whole and each in terms of its parts.”¹⁹² He makes form his point of

them, whether that responsibility is in the form of a composition, preservation, handing down, or collection.” Harry P Nasuti, *Tradition History and the Psalms of Asaph*, SBL Dissertation Series 88 (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1988), 56-57.

¹⁸⁴ E.g. Delitzsch, 140-143; Goulder, 17-36; and Weiser, 21, 25.

¹⁸⁵ Nasuti, 56.

¹⁸⁶ Weiser, 94.

¹⁸⁷ Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 168. Cf. 165-169.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 169-170.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 169.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 170. By contrast, lament in the early period is a self-contained complaint to God while in the later period; it also existed independently but with a diminished element of complaint to God. Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 171.

¹⁹¹ Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 171-172.

¹⁹² Ibid., 165.

departure for understanding psalms of lament.¹⁹³ Accordingly, ‘deviations’ are assessed in keeping with the degree to which they depart from form.¹⁹⁴ Form determines whether a psalm belongs to an early, middle or late tradition vis-à-vis the development of its parts, their relationships to each other and theological emphases.¹⁹⁵

The material may bear out the associations he makes but we fear that a hermeneutic that starts from literary typologies risks making those typologies presumptive interpreters of the material and robs the material of the initiative to signify.¹⁹⁶ This is not different from making *Sitz im Leben* the basis for understanding psalms.

In the following analysis, we assume no overriding typology for the psalm although we acknowledge the likelihood of its use in the 8th century cult. We seek to discern afresh the associations made by the compiler(s) through a very careful ‘hearing’ of the text and with an eye for epistemological cues. The commentary is made in the light of the poetic analysis in Appendix V.

B.2. Analytical Commentary

77:1¹⁹⁷

2 Ch 5:12 and 35:15 associate “according to Jeduthun” (עַל־יְדֻתֻן)¹⁹⁸ with Jeduthun or his descendants.¹⁹⁹ Associating names in titles with authors runs into an obvious problem. Asaph and Jeduthun both appear in this title.

¹⁹³ Cf. Walter Brueggemann, “The Costly Loss of Lament,” *JSOT*, no. 36 (1986): 58.

¹⁹⁴ Thus, Ps 77, “*Diverges* so markedly from the individual laments that it can barely be reckoned among them”. (Italics, mine). Claus Westermann, *The Living Psalms*, trans. J. R. Porter, English ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 102-103.

¹⁹⁵ Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 171-173; Westermann, *Living Psalms*, 5-6.

¹⁹⁶ E.g. Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 188-189. For interpretive cues based on perceived departures from form, see Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 191-193.

¹⁹⁷ In verse references to the Psalms, the verse-numbering is cited according to the Hebrew text. In the Psalms this is often one ahead of the verse-numbering in English editions.

¹⁹⁸ Note the reading tradition יְדֻתֻן for יְדֻתֻן in BHS.

¹⁹⁹ For instance, Goulder suggests that Ps 77, Ps 62 (עַל־יְדֻתֻן) and Ps 39 (לִי־יְדֻתֻן) all with spelling differences in the MSS and versions (LXX and Targums), share certain features. Goulder, 98-99.

77:2

The ethos of lament is self-evident in the form of this strophe. ‘My voice [is] to God’ (קוֹלִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים, A₁, A₂) appears first for effect and emphasis. It casts its shadow over ‘I will cry out’ (אֶצְעָקָה),²⁰⁰ and its effect, ‘and he will hear me’ (וְהִשְׁמָעוּן אֱלֹי, A₂).²⁰¹ ‘My voice to God’ is clearly ‘titular’, characterizing the entire psalm. The lament presumes God’s audience and anticipates his answer thereby implying the context of covenant.

77:3

In 3A, we have in declarative prose what we had in graphic depiction (v.2): an anguished seeking after God. Presumably, the exclamatory ‘my voice to God’ is an anguished utterance. In 3B, we have in declarative prose the concomitant posture of the hand in this state: arms stretched out before God without feeling numb, presumably because the anguish of the soul is ‘louder’ than the fatigue of the outstretched arms.²⁰²

It is appropriate that ‘poured out’ (נָגַדָה)²⁰³ expresses the action of ‘hand’ (יָד) since there appears to be a blur in distinction between the anguished heart (evidenced by C) and the outstretched arm.

²⁰⁰ Reading קוֹלִי as ‘My voice’ as opposed to a verb, ‘I will call out’ (so, NRS and RSV) resolves the ambiguity of contending with two verbs in v. 2A₁ that state the same thing. The rather disjointed קוֹלִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים is quite appropriate for the mood of a psalm of lament.

²⁰¹ Delitzsch suggests that the vocalization of וְהִשְׁמָעוּן suggests that it were meant to be an imperative after the analogy of the form הִקְשִׁיל which occurs in addition to הִקְשִׁיל. Delitzsch, 402. However, treating וְהִשְׁמָעוּן as imperfect is grammatically possible (first א root) and the aspect of its parallel verb (אֶצְעָקָה) does not warrant an imperative.

²⁰² Cf. Delitzsch, 403.

²⁰³ The action of ‘hand’ (יָד) is commonly expressed by נָטַח in the Bible. BDB, 639-640. This had led some to suggest ‘before him’ (Gk ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ = נִגְדָה), BHS, 1158, note 3c, or ‘my eyes’ (עֵינִי) for ‘my hand’ (יָדִי), BDB, 620., נָגַד, 4. Goulder notes that “the verb is surprising, and should be understood as of repeated movement in a downward direction, pleading for mercies.” Goulder, 99. Delitzsch understands נָגַד here to mean ‘poured forth’ or ‘spread out’, not ‘poured out’ “for נָגַד, the radical meaning of which is, as Syriac shows, to draw one’s self out long, *protrahere*, does not have this meaning.” Delitzsch, 403.

77:4

A₁ reflects the psalmist's mental anguish. A₂ reflects the physical effects of this anguish for, although 'and my spirit faints away' (וְרוּחִי עָפָף רֹחִי) has a metaphysical subject, the expression refers to 'draining of vigour or strength'.²⁰⁴

77:5-7

These verses are an 'exposition' of v.4 in an inverted manner. 4A₂, the physical effects of the anguish, are expanded in the members of v.5. 'You have grasped the eyelids of my eyes' attributes this sleep deprivation to God. The mental, the physical and cause are combined together. Causing sleep deprivation is euphemistic and concrete for perplexity and lament. Both stem from God's inactivity (in the face of distressful circumstances implied throughout the psalm).²⁰⁵ The euphemism is for the purposes of observing appropriate decorum, not to disguise the query.²⁰⁶

Verses 6-7 develop further the 'memory' (זִכָּר) and 'musing' (שִׁיחַ) in v.4. The recurrence of the two ideas in v.7A, B suggests that vv.4 and 7 form an *inclusio*. They develop the ideas to the stage where the psalmist has voiced the occasion for dispiritedness: reflection on God and the past. 'My music' (נְגִינָה, 7A)²⁰⁷ must refer to praises associated with happier days (when God's 'right hand' was manifest)²⁰⁸ making the Exodus event and the Song possible referents.

²⁰⁴ Delitzsch notes that each of the two members of v.4 consists of a protasis and an apodosis. He also suggests this link between the mental and the physical. Delitzsch, 403.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Delitzsch, 403.

²⁰⁶ This conclusion is based on the premise that the particulars of communication *in this community* are informed by hierarchical concerns. The lesser may only question the greater indirectly, skilfully couching their queries in non-confrontational language. In this regard, we differ with the rationale offered by Westermann viz. that "complaint against God does not have a dominant role in individual lament psalms" or that the recession of "the accusatory question directed at God" into the background is a consequence of the petitioner's fear to confront God with the question "Why?" Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 183-184.

²⁰⁷ So, also Goulder, 101; and Delitzsch, 403.

²⁰⁸ Cf. 11B.

We may have here, then, a suggestion of the enduring memory of songs associated with past events.²⁰⁹ Rational inquiry is the activity of ‘my spirit’ (רוּחִי) in 7B₂ demonstrating a use of ‘spirit’ that is the equivalent of ‘my heart’ (לִבִּי) in 7B₁.

77:8-10

Verses 8-10 differ from the previous section in that they express the substance of the ‘remembering’ and ‘musing’ in terms of the questions that the crisis raises. As such, this unit, distinguished by the interrogative הָ and its variants and the pausal סָלָה, is an elaboration of ‘recall’, ‘muse’ and ‘search’ in vv.4-7. עוֹלָמִים, ‘long ago’ in 6A₂ since the acts remembered presumably occurred at definite points in history, is now an indefinite future, ‘forever’, 8A. עוֹלָמִים is flexible enough to represent a definite past and an indefinite future.

The questions reveal the perplexities that God’s inactivity generates in the psalmist. God is addressed remotely (third person) through indirect questions thereby preserving the space demanded by hierarchical concerns.

God’s inactivity suggests rejection and displeasure (v.8), cessation of God’s loving kindness, חֶסֶד, and the failure of his promise, אָמַר (v.9). It suggests mutation on God’s part vis-à-vis forgetting to be gracious and drawing together (shutting) his compassions (v.10). All these reflect on God’s covenant faithfulness.

These suggestions are rhetorical²¹⁰ making them simultaneously prayers. They invite God to demonstrate that none of the suggestions is the case. They are lament with the sharp edge of appeal for ‘suggestion’ to a superior is the equivalent of direct request.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ Cf. Delitzsch, 403-404. Goulder identifies הִנֵּחִי with a stringed-accompanied psalm “chanted at dawn with a small company of minstrels.” Goulder, 101. Others read the LXX equivalent, הִנֵּחִי from הִנֵּחַ, ‘to muse’, BHS, note 7b, perhaps reading the הִנֵּחִי in v.13 A back into this verse (as could be suggested by the fact that the synonyms הִנֵּחַ and שִׁחַ occur in both texts). E.g. Monsignor Edward J. Kissane, *The Book of Psalms*, vol. 2 (Dublin: The Richview Press, 1954), 29; and Weiser, 529.

²¹⁰ Cf. Lam 3:22.

²¹¹ Cf. Hab 3:2. Scholars interpret the questions variously including as the “doubting questions of the tempted one,” Delitzsch, 404., the equivalent of negative statements, therefore expressions of faith, Kissane, 29., and expressions of hope based on the covenant which God made with his people during the exodus journey. Goulder, 101.

The questions then, betray the *theological significance* of the deeds of Yahweh among his people. They evidence his embrace, loving kindness and grace towards them. They are signs of his immanence. Therefore, their dearth, particularly in the context of a crisis, raises questions about the covenant.

This analysis is rooted in the experiences of a believing community evidencing a presumed epistemological constitution unlike Westermann's form-driven analysis for whom 'lament' essentially refers to questions and is distinct from 'appeal' or 'petition'²¹² or other elements found in later material such as 'praise'.²¹³ In doing so, we uphold the priority of the social-cultural and theological praxis for the biblical material.²¹⁴

77:11

In the light of the discussion above, v.11 is an admission of the cause, 'sickness' (חֲלוּתִי), of the psalmist's perplexity: 'the changing of the right hand of the Most High' suggested by the absence of deliverance or the manifestation of 'the right hand of God'.²¹⁵ However, this "notoriously difficult verse"²¹⁶ lends itself to other exegetical possibilities:

In the rendering of חֲלוּתִי... even the Targum vacillates between מִרְעוּתִי (mine affliction) and בְּעוּתִי (my supplication); it vacillates similarly in the rendering of 11b between אֶשְׁתַּחֲוֶי (have changed) and שָׁנִין (years).²¹⁷

Possibilities also include interpreting חֲלוּתִי as a *piel infinitive* of חלה I, 'to be sick or weak', and שֵׁנוֹת as *qal infinitive construct* of שנה I, 'to change', yielding the sense, "this is my infirmity, that the right hand of the Most High doth change."²¹⁸

²¹² Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 198.

²¹³ Even the so-called early forms of the lament, "the primordial lament", are merely questions arising out of the pain of affliction. Ibid., 195-196.

²¹⁴ Cf. Brueggemann, "Costly Loss of Lament," 59.

²¹⁵ Cf. v.4A₁ where it is the very memory of God, paralleling 'the right hand of the Most High' (יָמִין עֲלִיּוֹן) in v.11A, that causes 'disquiet' (אֶהְיֶה) or 'weakness of spirit' (חֲלָהּ רֹחַ), v.4A₂. Cf. Delitzsch, 403.

²¹⁶ Goulder, 102.

²¹⁷ Delitzsch, 404-405.

²¹⁸ E.g. Goulder, 101-102. Cf. YLT; RSV; NRSV; The NJB (which paraphrases שֵׁנוֹת to read 'lost its strength'); and Kissane who assumes the interrogative הָ for this verse that governs vv.8-10 thus extending the 'negative statement motif.' Kissane, 29.

Alternatively, שָׁנוֹת is rendered ‘years.’ This usually requires substantial inclusions into the text to make any sense at all.²¹⁹ However, it seems to be defensible based on ‘days from of old’ (יָמִים מִקֶּדֶם, 6A₁) and its parallel, ‘years of old’ (שָׁנוֹת עוֹלָמִים, 6A₂). Some read חֲלוּחִי, ‘my sickness’ or ‘wound’ where חֲלוּחִי is the *qal infinitive* of חָלַל.²²⁰ This is then read with שָׁנוֹת as ‘years’ or as ‘changing.’ Another option has been to read חֲלוּחִי as derived from חָלַה II, ‘to seek favour of’, ‘entreat.’²²¹

None of the possibilities above (other than the last one) compromise our suggestion. The psalmist’s perplexity, whether as ‘weakness’ or ‘wound’, is occasioned by the absence of a manifestation of the hand of God, whether as ‘the years of the right hand of the Most High’ or ‘the changing of the right hand of the Most High’.

77:12-16

As a statement of the psalmist’s state, v.11 summarises the perplexities explored in vv. 8-10. However, in naming the occasion for this perplexity, it introduces the next section of the psalm, a graphic re-presentation of ‘the right hand of the Most High’ in vv. 12-16.²²² This section is characterised by direct address to God.²²³

77:12

“I remember” lit. “I cause to remember” requires translating the *Ketib* אֶזְכִּיר as a Hiph’il and underscores the enduring and disruptive nature of this memory in the current crisis.²²⁴ The context of its earlier uses in the psalm suggests that ‘the deeds of Jah’ (12A) and ‘your wonders’ (12B) are the substance of ‘God’ (4A₁) and ‘my

²¹⁹ Thus, the KJV’s “This is my infirmity: *but I will remember* the years of the right hand of the Most High.”

²²⁰ BHS note 11^a, p.1158. Cf. Delitzsch, 400, who renders it ‘my cross’; NJB (‘wound’); and NKJB (‘anguish’).

²²¹ E.g. J. H. Eaton, *Psalms* (London: SCM Press, 1967), cited by Goulder, 102.

²²² Cf. Kissane, 29-30.

²²³ See the 2.p.s. suffixes (ךָ); the vocative (אֱלֹהִים) in v.14, the 2.p.s. subject pronoun (אַתָּה) in v.15; and 2.p.s. verbs in vv.15 and 16 (הוֹדֵעַתָּ, הִנְאִלְתָּ).

²²⁴ Thus, Delitzsch and Goulder interpret אֶזְכִּיר as ‘calling to mind previous deeds’ in the present crisis. Delitzsch, 405-406; and Goulder, 102, 103.

music' (7A) earlier. If so, vv. 13-16 below are part of the entreaty by virtue of the contrast they embody with the present.²²⁵ The notion of 'remember' or 'recall' (זכר) governs this verse. The use of the rare יה for 'God' evokes the Song at the Sea.²²⁶

77:13

Where זכר governed v.12, 'meditation' or 'musing' (שיח, חנה) in this verse indicate a shift towards reflection, a development of the notion of 'recall.' In this regard, we may understand vv. 12-13 to be an expansion of v.7 where both זכר and שיח occur.

77:14

The rhetorical 14 B introduces the specific acts of God that follow in vv.15-16. It also evokes Exodus 15:11 where the interrogative anticipates a litany of divine accomplishments governed by direct address in verses 12-13.²²⁷

77:15

15 B recalls the *raison d'être* of the wonders of God vis-à-vis their declarative (Hiph., ידע) purpose. We have already encountered this application in the Exodus event in relation to both the children of Israel and the Egyptians.²²⁸

77:16

'You redeemed your people' (נָאֲלָתָּ ... עַמְּךָ) evokes 'this people whom you have redeemed' (עַם-יְהוָה נָאֲלָתָּ), Exod 15:13. Other parallels between Exod 15 and Ps 77 include the following. 15:2, יְהוָה cf. Ps 77:12, יְהוָה; 15:11, עָשָׂה פֶלֶא, בְּקִרְשׁוֹ ... בְּאֵלִים [כְּמִכָּה] בְּקִרְשׁוֹ ... עָשָׂה פֶלֶא, cf. Ps 77:14-15, עָשָׂה פֶלֶא, בְּקִרְשׁוֹ ... מִי־אֵל גָּדוֹל [כְּאֱלֹהִים] עָשָׂה פֶלֶא, cf. Ps 77:14-15, נְחִיתָ בְּחִסְדְּךָ עַם-יְהוָה [נָאֲלָתָּ, 15:13; בְּקִרְשׁוֹ ... מִי־אֵל גָּדוֹל [כְּאֱלֹהִים] עָשָׂה פֶלֶא, cf. Ps 77:14-15,

²²⁵ Cf. Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 215, 216.

²²⁶ Exod 15:2. Cf. Kissane, 30; and Goulder, 103.

²²⁷ See the 2.p.s.verbs and pronominal suffixes there.

²²⁸ See the discussion on pp. 153-157.

cf. Ps 77:16, עָמַד [בְּזִרְעֵי] נָאֵלֶת and Ps 77:21, נָחִיתָ [כְּצֹאֵן] עָמַד. Also see Ps 77:9, חֲסִדוֹ [הָאֱפֶס לְנִצָּח]; 15:5, תְּהוֹמוֹת cf. Ps 77:17, תְּהוֹמוֹת. There is a sense, then, in which historical re-presentation in vv.12-16 is achieved by evoking an earlier appropriation of the Exodus narrative, the Song at the Sea.²²⁹ For this reason, the commentary pertaining to allusions to *Chaoskampf* in the analysis of the Song at the Sea also applies here.

77:17

The waters are personified and react to God.²³⁰ תְּהוֹמוֹת, particularly as subject, invites comparison with the Canaanite myth.²³¹ 17 A-B especially evokes the death throes of Yam at the hands of Baal.²³²

77:18-20

Vv.18-20 continues the genre of re-enactment. However, the fusion of elements that may refer to some of the plagues in Egypt²³³ with probable Exodus event elements²³⁴ requires critical analysis of both the language and what it evokes. One possible explanation is to regard vv.17-20 as evoking the victory of the Creator over תְּהוֹמוֹת, perhaps as a prototype of Yahweh's victory over the enemies of Israel²³⁵ and the language of divine deliverance.²³⁶ Another is to regard v.19 as evoking Canaanite cosmology with respect to the creation of the world. Thus, 'created' (בָּרָא, Gen 1:1) is not a reference to creating *ex nihilo* but 'dividing,' "the cosmogonic differentiation of

²²⁹ Goulder suggests, "The relationship is sufficiently close, especially with Ps. 77.11-15, that we may think that the third Selah following these verses, in fact consisted of Exod.15.1b-18, the Song of the Sea." Goulder, 104, 105, 106. Cf. Dahood, 231.

²³⁰ Thus Delitzsch, "when He turned His glance to the Red Sea, which stood in the way of His redeemed, the waters immediately fell as it were into birth pangs." Delitzsch, 407.

²³¹ Weiser sees 17 C as a reference to the saving deeds wrought by God at the creation. Weiser, 533.

²³² See references to the Ugarit version of the myth on p. 160.

²³³ E.g. 'thunderstorm.' Delitzsch, 407. Compare Exod 9:18-25 with Ps 77:18-19.

²³⁴ Compare 'your way was in the sea', Ps 77:20A with Exod 14. Cf. Weiser, 533.

²³⁵ Dahood, 23.

²³⁶ Goulder, 105. However, Kissane sees the section not as referring to the crossing of the Red Sea but as "the coming of God in judgement...described in the conventional terms of a theophany. His coming is heralded by commotion in the sea (17), the heavens (18), and the earth (19). The waters here, therefore, are not the waters of the Red Sea, but the waters of the abyss." Kissane, 30.

the primordial chaos into two opposing principles,” ‘the heavens’ (הַשָּׁמַיִם), above, and ‘the earth’ (הָאָרֶץ), “but in a pregnant sense, and with overtones of the underworld, below.” This differentiation, with the addition of the “third element, the middle part, habitation of the animal kingdom and man as its pinnacle,” is what v.19 evokes.²³⁷

77:21

The conclusive nature of this verse is evident in its departure from the language of enactment to narrative-like style.

Allusions to Jeduthun and Asaph strongly support a cultic *Sitz im Leben*. The psalm is clearly a lament, where ‘lament’ is not merely “to feel or express great sadness or disappointment”²³⁸ but to do so as an integral part of petition to God. The petition motif is evident in the fact that God is the addressee, the rhetorical nature of the questions in vv.8-10 and the polemical nature of the re-presentation of history in vv.12-21.²³⁹

Indirect devices of communication thus make petition.²⁴⁰ Re-presentation of history evokes the Song in Exodus, material that is *there* a triumph song.

²³⁷ Wyatt, *Myths of Power*, 22-23. In support of this theory, he translates the Hebrew of v.19 as follows: “The voice of your thunder was in the dome of the heavens; lightnings lit up the world; the underworld shook and quaked.” Wyatt, *Myths of Power*, 23.

²³⁸ Wehmeier, ed., 719.

²³⁹ “In this Lament Psalm we here find Yahweh’s victory over the sea at the Exodus appealed to as a ground for hope in the present”. Day, 97.

²⁴⁰ “The psalmist leaves the reader to infer the lesson of the Exodus – The God who overcame the power of pharaoh can conquer Babylon; and He who divided the Red Sea can overcome all obstacles to the return of Israel.” Kissane, 30.

C. The Covenant at Shechem

Joshua 24:1-28

C.1. *Sitz im Leben* of Joshua 24

Given the controversy surrounding the text of Joshua,²⁴¹ the *Sitz im Leben* of Joshua 24 cannot, so far, be resolved by revisionist considerations. The history of the biblical texts evidences both a re-working of various traditions into 'new' constructs as Scripture and even a re-working of Scripture to address fresh concerns.²⁴² For our purposes, MT and the LXX versions of Joshua are bona fide appropriations, albeit for different concerns, of a common tradition in spite of Auld's suggestion that "we should disqualify our familiar Hebrew text from serving as a sure base for a close examination of the literary structure and relationships in the book of Joshua."²⁴³ The texts at the disposal of the respondents are translations from the MT. Therefore, we will consider the *Sitz im Leben* of Joshua as found there. In doing so, we realise that 'version' has implications for literary history and, in turn, for the material's incorporation into grander meta-narratives.²⁴⁴

²⁴¹ The debate revolves around the differences between the longer Hebrew text (MT) and the shorter Greek text (LXX) of Joshua, both which offer complete accounts yet differ in several parts, and how these differences reflect on the transmission and compilation (s) of the narrative. A. Graeme Auld, *Joshua Retold: Synoptic Perspectives*, ed. David J. Reimer, Old Testament Studies (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), 1, 7-18; William T. Koopmans, *Joshua 24 as Poetic Narrative*, ed. David J. A. Clines and Philip R. Davies, JSOT Supplement Series, vol. 93 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 92-95.

²⁴² For example, "Geiger not only demonstrated that the major textual versions (the Septuagint, Targumic, and Samaritan recensions) reflect reworkings of the Hebrew Bible in the light of post-biblical social and theological concerns, but that the Hebrew Bible is itself the product (and source) of such reworkings." Fishbane, 5.

²⁴³ Auld, 11. He suggests we resort to the "more-or-less 'original' common text" for answers "to our literary questions about the completed book of Joshua" and, with limits, giving the Greek version preference. Auld, 12, 18. Cf. A. G. Auld, "Textual and Literary Studies in the Book of Joshua," *ZAW* 90 (1978): 412-417; and "Joshua: The Hebrew and Greek Texts," in *Studies in the Historical Books of the Old Testament. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* 30, ed. J. A. Emerton (Leiden: 1979), 1-14.

²⁴⁴ Such meta-narratives include whether to read Joshua as part of the Pentateuch or the narratives of the former prophets. Auld, *Joshua Retold*, 129. Cf. Robert G. Boling, *Joshua: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary*, First ed., The Anchor Bible, vol. 6 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1984), 40; and Gerhard von Rad, *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays*, trans. E. W. Trueman Dicken (Edinburgh and London: Oliver & Boyd, 1966), 1.

In the Hebrew Bible, the narrative is a culmination of Israel's history of redemption from Egypt, the granting of the Promised Land.²⁴⁵ Thus, von Rad observes, "That which is recounted, from the creation of the world and the call of Abraham to the completion of the conquest under Joshua, is purely and simply a 'history of redemption.'" He thinks that this history attained creedal status, a summary of the principal facts of God's redemptive activity²⁴⁶ that is incorporated into several theological re-appropriations of Israel's history of redemption. Joshua's "oration to the congregation at Shechem" (24:2b-13) is such an appropriation.²⁴⁷

However, the variety of ways in which this history is found in the historical literature, prophets and psalms has led some to question von Rad's otherwise useful analysis. The liberty of expression in these appropriations militates against the notion that creedal formulae in the form of cultic liturgies were their source.²⁴⁸

Joshua belongs together with Exodus in narrating that supreme example of God's grace.²⁴⁹ Generation to generation recited, sung, and invoked it as part of the very fabric of Israel's faith and reflection in the context of a course of history moulded by her God.²⁵⁰

Its specific location in the Hebrew Bible seems to reflect rabbinic consideration of the book as part of the Former Prophets immediately following the Torah.²⁵¹

However, as literature, Joshua is judged to belong to the Deuteronomistic,²⁵² essentially a corpus of material concerned with two facts in the received tradition: the divine promise of the land to the 'fathers' and the Sinai covenant. Its editors apparently sought to re-shape Israel's history in order to cope with the collapse of the

²⁴⁵ A. Graeme Auld, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth*, ed. John C. L. Gibson, The Daily Study Bible (Old Testament) (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1984), 1. Cf. Boling, 4.

²⁴⁶ Rad, *Hexateuch*, 2.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

²⁴⁸ Boling, 8-9. Wright suggests, instead, a rich oral tradition, the living tradition of the people whose history our tools can hardly unravel. G. E. Wright, "Introduction," in *Joshua: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible, 9.

²⁴⁹ Boling, 3.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 3, 6; Rad, *Hexateuch*, 144.

²⁵¹ Boling, 40. For a discussion of the extension of the term 'prophet' to every great leader in Israel's past tradition, see Albright, 208-213.

²⁵² 'Deuteronomist' is generally regarded as "a convenient symbol for a theological school of thought that had its origin in north Israel before moving to Judah after 724-721 B.C. and the destruction of Israel." Wright, "Introduction," 41, 51.

nation and the religious ideology on which it had rested.²⁵³ Therefore, Joshua is an instrument of God's power in the conquest of the Promised Land. The book's synoptic theological affinity with the Torah²⁵⁴ has led it to be considered together with it by some late nineteenth and early twentieth-century scholars as 'Hexateuch.'²⁵⁵

Martin Noth²⁵⁶ considers Josh 24 to have had its own history of redaction before its introduction into the basic Deuteronomic book. In its current redacted state, it describes "the covenant ceremony which created 'all Israel' (that is, the Twelve Tribes League) at Shechem on the soil of the Promised Land."²⁵⁷

Applying Modern historiography to Hebrew tradition has supposedly exposed this redaction.²⁵⁸ This canonical *Sitz im Leben*, so to speak, is judged as fictional, invented.²⁵⁹ The basis for such conclusions is archaeological evidence or the lack of it²⁶⁰ by 'objective' Modern scholarship.²⁶¹

At the heart of this debate is how scholars extract history from oral traditions²⁶² and their appropriations. When we consider the fragmentary nature and ambiguity of

²⁵³ Johannes C. de Moor and Harry F. van Roy, eds., *Past, Present, Future: The Deuteronomistic History and the Prophets* (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2000), viii. Cf. Auld, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth*, 2-3.

²⁵⁴ For apparent instances of "the Deuteronomic editing of Joshua," see Wright, "Introduction," 56.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 55. Cf. A. Graeme Auld, *Joshua, Moses and the Land: Tetrateuch-Pentateuch-Hexateuch in a Generation since 1938* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1980).

²⁵⁶ Martin Noth, *Das Buch Josua*, Second ed., Handbuch Zum Alten Testament (Tübingen: Moir, 1953), cited by Wright, "Introduction," 61.

²⁵⁷ Wright, "Introduction," 61. Joshua 24 is regarded as one of the Deuteronomist's "own summarizing passages" in which the Deuteronomist achieved theological unity of the entire material credited with 'his' editorial activity. Auld, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth*, 3.

²⁵⁸ Wright, "Introduction," 4.

²⁵⁹ P. R. Davies, *In Search of Ancient Israel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 25. Cf. Niels Peter Lemche, *Ancient Israel: A New History of Israelite Society* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1988); and Thomas L. Thompson, *Early History of the Israelite People: From the Written and Archaeological Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 1992).

²⁶⁰ Lemche, *Ancient Israel*, 72, 73.

²⁶¹ Wright, "Introduction," 72, 73. Cf. W. G. Dever, *Who Were the Early Israelites, and Where Did They Come From?* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2003), 228 and Nicolai Winther-Nielsen, *A Functional Discourse Grammar of Joshua: A Computer-Assisted Rhetorical Structure Analysis*, ed. Tryggve N.D. Mettinger and Magnus Y. Ottosson, *Coniectanea Biblica. Old Testament Series* 40 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1995), 2-9.

²⁶² Thus, Thompson decries the paucity or even lack of 'direct written evidence' or 'textual references' and 'epigraphic evidence' for reconstructing the history of Israel. Thompson, 60, 322. Cf. M. D. Koster, "The Historicity of the Bible: Its Relevance and Its Limitations in the Light of near

archaeological data and the input of the inquirer into the ‘findings’, in spite of Modern scholarship’s claims to the contrary, we arrive at a rather tenuous base for judging the authenticity (or falsity) of biblical events and their representations in the texts.²⁶³

Clearly, archaeology and other historical-critical tools of inquiry can only be instruments in the context of presuppositions.²⁶⁴ The attempt to minimise (or suspend) presuppositions is a *methodological stance* and should not be the critical factor in resolving ambiguities in the data as doing so makes it a bias or predisposition.²⁶⁵ Given the tenuous nature of the data and historical inquiry, such a bias generates a new dogma, exclusion of the possibility of certain truth, which contradicts the very suspension of presuppositions it cherishes.

In the following textual analysis, we concentrate on the form and place of Josh 24 in the MT as an instance of inner-biblical appropriation of the Exodus event by Moses’ successor, Joshua, and Israel, the people of God. The fact that Christian and Jewish traditions view Joshua as belonging to different grand-meta-narratives²⁶⁶ does not compromise its function in the MT.

For our purposes, we assume the historical context suggested by the text, the conquest of the land of Canaan and a meeting at Shechem. Accordingly, its presumed *Sitz im Leben* is the renewal of the covenant at Shechem after the allotment of the land to the tribes of Israel. The following commentary is based on the discourse analysis of Josh 24:1-28 in Appendix VI.

Eastern Archaeology - from Catalyst to Cataclysm,” in *Past, Present, Future: The Deuteronomistic History & the Prophets*, 124, 140, 143.

²⁶³ Cf. Wright, “Introduction,” 76; Koster, 123.

²⁶⁴ Cf. Norman K. Gottwald, “Triumphalist Versus Anti-Triumphalist Versions of Early Israel: A Response to Articles by Lemche and Dever in Volume 4 (1996),” *CR* 5 (1997): 15-42.

²⁶⁵ Wright, “Introduction,” 77. Cf. Iain W. Provan, V. Phillips Long, and Tremper Longman III, *A Biblical History of Israel* (Louisville: Westminster, 2003).

²⁶⁶ Auld, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth*, 2.

C.2. Analytical Commentary

The discourse analysis of Josh 24 indicates clear narrative shifts that shed light on the rhetorical structure of the text.²⁶⁷ The narrative may be divided into three portions, each replete with narrative shifts or ‘episodes’: the case for Yahweh from an appropriation of history, the challenge and the response of the people.

C.2.1. The case for Yahweh (24:1-13)

Background: v.1a-c. The gathering at Shechem

Joshua gathers all the tribes of Israel at Shechem and calls the leadership of the tribe: the elders, heads, judges and officials. It appears that ‘gathering all the tribes of Israel’ (1a, אָסַף...אֶת-כָּל-שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) is synonymous with ‘calling’ (קָרָא) the ‘various categories of leaders’ in 1b. Therefore, we understand the latter in 1c and in 2a below as the immediate audience of Joshua’s address. This underscores collective identity in Israel’s worldview. The leaders represent all the people.²⁶⁸

Auld considers this a religious assembly before the presence of God rather than a before Joshua. Apparently, the fact that ‘they presented themselves before God’ (וַיַּחֲזִיבּוּ לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים; 1c) makes Shechem (not Gilgal and Shiloh) the appropriate place for religious assembly. It also justifies the fact that Joshua speaks explicitly in God’s name.²⁶⁹ However, as we argue below, ‘presenting themselves before the presence of God’ or Joshua speaking explicitly in God’s name do not require a sacred place if Joshua is functioning as the servant of God.

²⁶⁷ In this we differ with Koopmans who argues for analysing the rhetorical structure of Josh 24:1-28 on the basis of the parallelism associated with Hebrew poetry, hence as “poetic narrative” or “narrative poetry.” Koopmans, 165. Cf. Winther-Nielsen, 310-311.

²⁶⁸ Cf. לִזְקֵנָיו וּלְרֹאשֵׁיו וּלְשֹׁפְטָיו וּלְשִׁטְרָיו with וַיִּקְרָא יְהוֹשֻׁעַ לְכָל-יִשְׂרָאֵל. Josh 23:2.

²⁶⁹ Auld, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth*, 120-121. Davies sees ‘before God’ as indicating the presence of the Ark. G. H. Davies, “The Ark in the Psalms,” in *Promise and Fulfilment: Essays Presented to Professor S. H. Hooke in Celebration of His Ninetieth Birthday, 21 January 1964/ by Members of the Society for Old Testament Study, and Others*, ed. F. F. Bruce (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1963), 61.

The case for Yahweh is presented in prophetic format.²⁷⁰ From 2c to 13d, Joshua adopts the genre of ‘historical re-enactment’ and stands in the place of God, hence the 1.imperf.s.²⁷¹ This retelling is an interpretation of Israel’s history as evident in its selective nature: what is included, excluded and emphasized.

Episode 1: v.2a-d. Israel’s pagan origins

The retelling begins with Terah and his children, Abraham and Nahor in the region across the river as servants (worshippers) of ‘other gods’ (אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים) ‘from long ago’ (מִעוֹלָם). Yahweh intends by it to remind ‘the people’ (הָעָם)²⁷² of their pagan origins as evident from the inclusiveness of ‘your fathers’ (אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם) in 2c. This episode also serves as the background to this particular interpretation of history.

Episode 2: vv.3-4. Abraham’s fare in Canaan

A change in geography, ‘the region across the river’ to ‘Canaan’ and movement in the narrative (action verbs) mark²⁷³ episode 2. Through a series of *wa’eqtols* (3a-4b), Yahweh emphasizes a series of actions that transform Israel’s pagan forefathers into the people of God.

He ‘took’ (לָקַח) their father Abraham from the region across the river; ‘brought’ (Hiph., הֵלִךְ) him to the land of Canaan; ‘multiplied’ (רָבָה) his seed i.e. ‘gave’ (נָתַן) to him Isaac and ‘gave’ (נָתַן) to Isaac Jacob and Esau. He ‘gave’ (נָתַן) to Esau Mount Seir to possess but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.

The absence of a *wa’eqtol* with Jacob’s action in 4c breaks the pattern. Yahweh did not send Jacob to Egypt. Jacob has not yet been *given* land to possess.²⁷⁴ Several narratives related to Jacob going down to Egypt (Gen 46) are glossed over (4c) as

²⁷⁰ בַּהֲאֱמֹר יְהוָה, 2b. Cf. Boling, 534.

²⁷¹ Winther-Nielsen attempted a computational demarcation of *wa’eqtol* forms and found that they did not form an independent structure other than marking the role of Yahweh as agent. Winther-Nielsen, 311, note 38.

²⁷² ‘People’ (עַם) with reference to Israel suggests their constitution by covenant with Yahweh. Boling, 120-121.

²⁷³ “New thematic participants and spatio-temporal shifts.” Winther-Nielsen, 311.

²⁷⁴ Cf. Winther-Nielsen, 312.

though to say that the *raison d'être* for that descent is irrelevant for the current appropriation of history.

Episode 3: v.5. Deliverance in Egypt

The narrative identifies Joshua's audience ('you,' אַתָּה, 5d. Also see 6b, 7b, e, f and 8a) with those who 'went down to Egypt' in 4c. The resurgence of *wa'eqtols* (5a-b) indicates where the action of Yahweh is: it *was not* in the 'going down'²⁷⁵ to Egypt but it *was in* the deliverance. He 'sent' Moses and Aaron. He 'plagued' (נגף)²⁷⁶ Egypt. Between 5a and 5b, we have Exodus 1-14 barring the event at the sea. He 'brought them out' (צא, 5d and 6a below). The identification of Joshua's audience at Shechem with those who participated in the exodus (5d) is particularly indicative of continuity between the two groups to the point where the experiences of the one are also those of the other.²⁷⁷

Episode 4: vv.6-7. Deliverance at the sea

The narrative goes into some detail concerning the activities at the sea, presumably to underscore the predicament that Israel was in and the resolution of that predicament by the hand of Yahweh. Therefore, 6a is a headline summary of this episode. 'Bring out' (צא) closes episode 3 (הוצאתי, 5d) and opens episode 4 (והוציא, 6a) to highlight its centrality. Israel's predicament at the sea (6b), the pursuit by Egypt with chariotry and horsemen (6c), Israel's crying out for help to Yahweh (7a), his immediate act of protection (7b), and ultimate destruction of Egypt (7c-d) all go to demonstrate the extent of Yahweh's role as deliverer.

For a moment, Joshua shifts from the mode of 'historical re-enactment' (*wa'eqtols*) to 'historical narration' (*wayeqtols*), within 'thus says the Lord', 2b.²⁷⁸ This

²⁷⁵ Maybe it was. However, this is not important for this appropriation.

²⁷⁶ Or, "treated violently." Winther-Nielsen, 312.

²⁷⁷ However, Boling sees this association as indicating either that Yahweh "is encountered as the God of a great variety of individuals and clans, each of whom makes its own identification with the Bene Israel", or that the alternation between 'you' and 'your ancestors' in vv.5-6 is stylistic. Boling, 534.

²⁷⁸ V.7a-c. See especially the *wayeqtols* in 7b-c.

corresponds with an earlier shift in the designation of the objects of Yahweh's actions ('you', 2.pl., 6b, with 'your fathers', 6c) that created the historical distance befitting 'historical narration'. Apparently, 'historical narration' maintains the distinctions between historical Israel and the congregation at Shechem and between Joshua and Yahweh while 'historical re-enactment' obscures them.

Historical re-enactment resumes with an appeal to self-witness thereby re-establishing continuity with the Exodus generation (7e).²⁷⁹ Clearly, this appropriation is meant to demonstrate Yahweh's initiative in 'bringing Israel out.' Consequently, the wilderness narratives are glossed over in one sentence ('You dwelt in the wilderness many days', 7f)²⁸⁰ because they are irrelevant to the case being made here.

Episode 5: vv.8-10. Conflict in the region across the River Jordan

We could divide this episode into two because there are two threats included: the Amorites (8a-e) and Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab (9a-10c). However, we will treat it as one because both threats relate to 'the region across the Jordan'.

Wa'eqtols (v.8a, c, and e) pick up Yahweh's initiative from 6a. He 'brought' (Hiph., בוא) them to the land of the Amorites across the Jordan (8a). He 'gave' (נתן) the Amorites into their hand (8c) and 'exterminated' (Hiph., שמד) them before Israel (8e). In 8d, the children of Jacob 'possess' (ירש)²⁸¹ land although Yahweh does not 'give' it to them. However, we may deduce a 'giving' of sorts from the facts that Yahweh 'brought' them to this land (8a) 'gave' the Amorites into their hand (8c) and 'exterminated' the Amorites (8e) almost as if 'possessing' their land is a natural consequence. Nevertheless, the absence of a *wa'eqtal* with נתן suggests that it is not the ultimate gift of land.

²⁷⁹ 'And your eyes saw', ותרְאֶינָה עֵינֶיכֶם, 7e.

²⁸⁰ Cf. Num 10:11-21:35. Focussing on 'dwell' (שב) as Winther-Nielsen ("they do not even walk away any more – 'you sat in the desert for many days,' Winther-Nielsen, 312.), or Boling ("and you lived. In the wilderness especially, long life is the salvific gift of Yahweh to those whose roots were not in the desert," Boling, 535.), detracts from incidental nature of this line to this appropriation.

²⁸¹ Cf. 4b where יהוה gave the Mount Seir to Esau to 'inherit' (ירש) it. Winther-Nielsen calls this "the first permanent solution." Winther-Nielsen, 313.

Balak's 'fight' (לחם),²⁸² 9b, with Israel constituted a bigger threat because he sought spiritual aid (9d). In a worldview where spiritual authorities are above physical ones, to seek a curse is to seek superior weaponry.²⁸³ The complication is that Yahweh is the spiritual authority whose help 'Bilaam' (Balaam) solicits to 'curse' (קלל, 9d) Israel on behalf of Balak, 10a.²⁸⁴ This may be an indication that Yahweh was Balaam's usual source of spiritual authority, including the power to curse. However, it may also be an indication that in the spiritual realm, Yahweh ultimately rules, the God of gods so to speak.

In any case, Yahweh 'blesses' (ברך, 10b) Israel and 'delivers' (נצל) her from Bilaam's²⁸⁵ hand, 10c. Notably, the congregation at Shechem is included in this generation ('you', 8a, b, c, 9d, 10b and d). However, at this stage, the same people probably feature in both the narratives and appropriation.

Episode 6: vv.11-13. Conflict in the land of promise

The first *w^a*- (11a) marks transition into a new episode, just as 11a in its entirety establishes the temporal framework of episode 6: conflict in the Promised Land. This time, the opponents are 'the lords of Jericho, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivvites and the Jebusites (11b), an extensively enlarged contingent.

Historically, one of the difficulties of this text is relating 'the lords of Jericho' (יְרִיחוֹ) (בְּעֵלֵי) with what follows in 11b.²⁸⁶ However, this opposition is the largest conglomeration of antagonistic forces at the final frontier, so to speak.²⁸⁷ Yahweh 'gave' (נתן) them into Israel's hands, a 'giving' that in this case includes Yahweh

²⁸² Boling finds this statement contradictory of Judges 11:25 since Balak only sought the services of a diviner to curse Israel. Boling, 536. However, his interpretation requires a closer reading of 'fight' than is probably warranted here.

²⁸³ Winther-Nielsen regards this as a "more subtle attack" than the Egyptian use of military force. Winther-Nielsen, 313. However, subtlety is hardly synonymous with heightened potency.

²⁸⁴ We infer this from the fact that it is Yahweh who refuses to 'listen' (שמע, 10a) to Bilaam.

²⁸⁵ However, the 3.m.s. pronominal suffix (10c) could also be a reference to Balak in 9a. Cf. Boling, 536.

²⁸⁶ The grammar suggests an appositive relationship and this is part of the problem. Cf. Winther-Nielsen, 313, note 44; and Boling, 536.

²⁸⁷ Cf. Winther-Nielsen, 313; Boling, 165-167.

fighting the Amorites (12a-b). The idea of Yahweh ‘sending the hornet’ (שִׁלַּח...הַצִּרְעָה), 12a) is already present in the Bible and in connection with the conquest of the land of Canaan.²⁸⁸ The latter part of 12b underscores the fact that it is Yahweh who accomplished this, not Israel’s weapons of war.²⁸⁹

Finally, Yahweh ‘gave’ (נָתַן) Israel ‘land’ (אֶרֶץ) that they did not ‘labour for’ and ‘cities’ (עָרִים) that they did not ‘build’ to ‘inhabit’ (יָשָׁב) (13a) and ‘vineyards’ (כַּרְמִים) and ‘olives’ (זֵיתִים) that they did not ‘plant’ to ‘eat’ (אָכַל). The participial construction, ‘you are eating’ (אֲתֶם אֹכְלִים), 13d, highlights the continuing nature of this gift. All together, v.13 is a more extensive description of ‘inheritance’ (יִרְשָׁה) than Esau’s inheritance (4b). In addition, compared to what was ‘possessed’ west of the Jordan River (8d), this one is ‘given’ (נָתַן, 13a). In this retelling, it is the ultimate ‘giving’ (נָתַן) of inheritance. Yahweh’s covenant faithfulness in this account becomes the basis for the appeal for covenant renewal in the next portion.

C.2.2. Joshua’s challenge to the people (24:14-15)

‘Now’ (עַתָּה), 14a, signals the end of the interpretation of history and the beginning of its application. Joshua is still Yahweh’s representative but not in the prophetic sense.

The challenge is presented as a series of imperatives: ‘fear’ (יִרָא) Yahweh, 14b; ‘serve’ (עֲבֹד) him, 14c, e; ‘turn aside from’ (Hiph., סֹר, 14d) and ‘choose’ (בַּחַר, 15b). The last one summarises the first three and spells out the alternatives: Yahweh or ‘other gods’ (15a-e). ‘Other gods’ apparently refers to deities other than Yahweh whether in the ‘region across the river’, Egypt or Canaan.²⁹⁰

The order of the imperatives suggests process. ‘Fear’ precedes ‘serve’ and begets it. It characterizes serving ‘with integrity and in truth’ (14c). ‘Turn aside’ stems from the first two. If so, Israel’s fundamental transgression is irreverence.²⁹¹ ‘Serving’

²⁸⁸ Exod 23:28 and Deut 7:20. Auld calls this “divinely inspired terror.” Auld, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth*, 122. Cf. Boling, 536-537.

²⁸⁹ For Wright, this is an illustration of Holy War ideology, which, in this case entailed the omission of battles, and heroes and the emphasis on Yahweh as sole actor, sole Warrior, by the narrator. Wright, “Introduction,” 27, 30-31.

²⁹⁰ Cf. 2d.

²⁹¹ Boling also regards the command to ‘revere’ (יִרָא) to be “the prime covenant stipulation.” Boling, 537. Cf. Josh 4:14, 24.

without ‘reverence’ is paying lip service and is not ‘service’ at all. This is an important qualification since ‘serve’ (עבד) is the central theme in Joshua’s challenge and the responses of the people.²⁹²

Joshua declares his position as leader of his household (15e). However, he is also the leader of the people and this confession, particularly as it aligns him with the ‘fathers’, amounts to an ominous challenge to Israel. To confess otherwise is tantamount to rebelling against Yahweh and rejecting their identity as covenant people continuous with the ‘fathers’.

In a society where collective identity extends to past generations, this would be an extremely weighty matter. Unless the leaders of the people are willing to break ranks with the imposing weight of their history as the ‘people of God’, there can only be one answer to the challenge posed by Joshua.²⁹³

C.2.3. The people’s answer (24:16-28)

The people’s answer is in three cycles that roughly correspond to *superficial indignation* (16-18), *choice* (19-21, perhaps repeated in v.24) and *pledge* (22). In this regard, ‘the people answered’ (וַיַּעֲנוּ הָעָם, 16a) should also be understood as the essence of both 21a and 22d below.

Cycle 1: vv.16-18. Superficial indignation

The leaders (1b-c) answer on behalf of ‘the people’ (הָעָם), 16a. This demonstrates both collective identity and the representative roles of those in positions of authority.

Their answer contains a note of scandal.²⁹⁴ Perhaps the ‘horror’ is at the very suggestion they are capable of undermining the covenant and reverting to ‘serving other gods’.²⁹⁵ The *thematic declaration* at the start of their answer (‘for the Lord is

²⁹² Derivatives of the consonants appear 7 times in vv.14-15 alone. In fact, Joshua’s final ‘we will serve’ (נַעֲבֹד, 15e) is echoed in the people’s response in 18b, 21b and 24b.

²⁹³ Winther-Nielsen also sees an element of ‘force’ in this challenge. Winther-Nielsen, 313-314.

²⁹⁴ Cf. ‘God forbid!’ or ‘far be it from us!’ (הֲלִילָה לָנוּ, 16c). For Boling, this is the equivalent of placing “themselves under the sanction of covenant curses.” Boling, 538.

²⁹⁵ See 2c-3a. Cf. לְעַבְדָּר אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים, 16c, with ‘abandoning’ (עִזַּב, 16c).

our God', כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, 17a), reinforces this.²⁹⁶ However, it would be a mistake to regard this note of scandal as an indication of the people's faithfulness to Yahweh and thus wrongful characterisation by Joshua, as we shall see in the next two cycles.

The rest of this cycle, 17a-18b, is essentially an explication of the reasons they cannot 'abandon' (עָזַב, 16c) Yahweh as evidenced by the preposition 'because' (כִּי, 17a). Yahweh is 'their' (נֹכַח, 17a) God. He is the one who 'brought' them and their fathers 'up' (Hiph., עָלָה) out of 'Egypt, the house of bondage' (17a-b). He 'worked before their eyes' (עָשָׂה לְעֵינֵינוּ, 17c) 'these great signs'; 'preserved' (שָׁמַר, 17d) them 'in all the way' and 'among all the peoples' they passed through; and 'drove out' (גרַשׁ, 18a) 'all the people and the Amorites who lived in the land. The 1.pl. pronouns in vv. 17 (e.g. 'who brought *us*... up from the land of Egypt', אֶתָּנוּ, 17a) demonstrate beyond doubt that they, too, regarded themselves as continuous with the 'fathers'.

Their answer includes additional details. Whereas 'these great signs' (17c) could be a truncated version of 5a-7f, they declare that Egypt was 'a house of bondage' (17b). They also declare a 'preserving' (שָׁמַר). This excess could be construed as part of the 'superficial indignation', an attempt to demonstrate that they understood Yahweh's role in their history more precisely than Joshua gave them credit. Based on all this, 'they too' (גַּם-אֲנַחְנוּ, 18b)²⁹⁷ register their intention to 'serve' (עָבַד) Yahweh.²⁹⁸

Cycle 2: vv.19-21. Choice

Joshua's counter-argument in this cycle appears to be a strategy to shift the discussion from the grand issues of understanding Yahweh's role in history to 'commitment to the covenant' by pointing out the requirements of 'serving' (עָבַד) Yahweh. In placing 'holy' (קָדַשׁ, 19c) and 'jealous' (קִנָּא, 19d) first, Joshua is clearly bringing attention to them as the bases for warning Israel against flippant confessions and declarations. God does not look kindly on 'unfaithfulness' (חַטָּא and פֶּשַׁע, 19e).

²⁹⁶ In this regard we chose to read this as a complete verb-less sentence (as also Boling, 538.) and the following 'He' (הוא) as the start of the following sentence detailing his deeds on their behalf as the people of God. Other interpreters see 'our God' (אֱלֹהֵינוּ) in apposition to 'the Lord' (יְהוָה), e.g. the KJV, RSV and NJB. The distinction is important for the light it throws on the emphasis on their sense of identity with Yahweh and how this nuances the rest of their answer.

²⁹⁷ Cf. Joshua's choice in 15e.

²⁹⁸ Boling sees the people's answer as "a polished rhetorical piece" and the introductory 'for' or 'because' (כִּי, 17a) as giving "exclamatory force to the Hebrew sentence." Boling, 538.

‘Your transgression’ (פֶּשְׁעֵכֶם, 19e) is perhaps best understood as the equivalent of ‘abandon’ (עִזַּב, 20a), divided or even non-existent loyalty, and ‘your sins’ (חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם) as the practices of those who have ‘abandoned’ (16c and 20a) the Lord. ‘Serving foreign gods’ (עִבַּד אֱלֹהֵי נֹכַר, 20a) is the equivalent of ‘abandoning’ (עִזַּב) Yahweh. Yahweh demanded exclusive worship²⁹⁹ therefore ‘pledge’ and ‘indignation’ are not enough if not rooted in consecrated living. This calls for choice³⁰⁰ ensuing in covenant fidelity (20b-c).³⁰¹

We should therefore read insistence (likely the force of ‘no, but’, לֹא כִּי, 21b) in the people’s next response. The absence of an accompanying explanation may indicate tacit admission of guilt. If so, and given Israel’s unfaithfulness so far,³⁰² 21b is a new start and the basis of the covenant renewal to follow.

Cycle 3: v.22. The pledge

The pledge underscores the centrality of ‘choice’ in this dialogue. They are witnesses to ‘their own choice’ (בְּחִירָתָם) ‘to serve’ (עִבַּד) Yahweh (22b-c, e). Based on this pledge, Joshua proceeds to conduct what is apparently a covenant renewal ritual.

C.2.4. vv.23-28. Covenant renewal

Covenant renewal is in four stages: exchange of vows, the ‘cutting’ (כָּרַח) of the covenant, documentation and establishment of a witness.

²⁹⁹ Cf. Auld, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth*, 126-129.

³⁰⁰ The people were given the choice to choose between gods although the terms were not for bargaining over. *Ibid.*, 124-126.

³⁰¹ We term the contents of vv.19a-20c as ‘reminding’ them because we think that in spite of his misgivings, Joshua wants them to serve Yahweh. Cf. L. Daniel Hawk, *Every Promise Fulfilled. Contesting Plots in Joshua*, Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster and John Knox Press, 1991), 135-136. Cf. Winther-Nielsen, 314.

³⁰² Cf. 14d.

Stage 1: vv.23-24. Exchange of vows

The fact that Joshua later cuts the covenant ‘for the people’³⁰³ indicates that he is representing Yahweh in this exchange. Commanding the people to ‘turn away from’ (סור) ‘the foreign gods that are in their midst’ (23b) and to ‘incline their hearts to Yahweh, the God of Israel’ (23c) indicates that they are still ‘serving other gods’.³⁰⁴ The people vow not only to ‘serve’ Yahweh, but also to ‘listen’ (שמע) to ‘His voice’. Putting the direct object ‘the Lord our God’ (אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱתֵיְהוָה, 24b) and ‘to his voice’ (וּבְקוֹלוֹ, 24c) first emphasizes *what* the people *have chosen*.³⁰⁵ Both declarations echo their foremost declaration in v.17a (“He is our God”) forming an *inclusio* with it and framing their answer. Within this frame, ‘we will serve’ (נַעֲבֹד, 18b, 21b and 24b) Yahweh is consistent. However, in Joshua’s judgement, this is a fresh ‘choice’ (בחר, 22c) necessitating witnesses (עֲדָיִם, 22b and e; עֵדָה, 27b): the congregation and a large stone.

Stages 2-4: vv.25-28. Cutting, documentation and establishment of witness

The three remaining stages of this covenant could end at 26c. In fast-paced narrative, the covenant is cut (25a)³⁰⁶ and a statute and an ordinance established at Shechem (25b),³⁰⁷ a record is made (26a) and a stone of witness erected (26c). The brevity of this narrative suggests that it is the dynamics that brought this congregation to the point of choice that are important. Therefore, it is not useful to inquire further into the details of the ‘statute’ (חֹק) and ‘ordinance’ (מִשְׁפָּט) established at Shechem, 25b, or

³⁰³ V.25a. To Boling, Joshua is acting as Yahweh’s negotiator for a covenant. Boling, 539.

³⁰⁴ Boling also regards 23b as conclusive: “While the people have been protesting their firm preference for Yahweh, Joshua knows that in fact there are some ‘patriarchal’ deities to be discarded.” Ibid. Cf. וְאֵם אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי הָאֲמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן, v. 15d.

³⁰⁵ Cf. Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Auld thinks that ל in 25a, b is a basis for ambiguity as to whether Joshua was standing with the people (hence ‘with’ or in Auld’s nuance, ‘for’) or was standing for God (hence ‘for’ or, in his nuance, ‘on’). Auld, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth*, 130. However, we consider his representative role as identifying him as God’s representative.

³⁰⁷ The RSV has ‘statutes’ and ‘ordinances’ for the singular ‘statute’ (חֹק) and ‘ordinance’ (מִשְׁפָּט), 25b. Cf. Exod 15:25 where a ‘statute’ and an ‘ordinance’ are made (or ‘is’ made) following the healing of bitter waters at Marah.

‘the words’ (הַדְּבָרִים, 26a)³⁰⁸ that Joshua wrote. Likewise, it is not useful to inquire further into ‘the holy place of the Lord’ (מִקְדָּשׁ יְהוָה, 26c).

Having said so, the rationalisation (v.27) of the enactment in 26b-c, yields some interesting points. The ‘stone’ (הָאֶבֶן, 26b, 27b) is a ‘witness’ (עֵדָה, 27b, d) in terms reminiscent of the people to themselves (עַרְיִים, 22b, e) because it has ‘heard’ (שָׁמַע, 27c) ‘all the words of Yahweh that He has spoken with us’ (27c).

The ‘witness’ value of the stone appears to lie in the fact that it will serve as a reminder to Israel about what transpired here.³⁰⁹ However, this point is couched in concrete terms that seemingly ascribe anthropomorphic characteristics to the stone. It has heard and kept record of what has transpired. The status of this stone, then, *lies in the significance given to it by Joshua and the people*. In their minds, it is a veritable witness and ‘though silent, it speaks clearly.’³¹⁰

D. The Prayer of Habakkuk

Habakkuk 3:1-19

D.1. *Sitz im Leben* of Habakkuk 3

Habakkuk departs from the familiar pattern in biblical prophetic books in that, other than the name,³¹¹ there are no personal details about the prophet. Paucity of details extends to history and tradition. Outside the Bible, ‘Habakkuk’ only appears in references in the Apocryphal book of *Daniel, Bel and the Snake*.³¹²

³⁰⁸ For instance, Boling suggests that ‘the words’ was a reference to the Decalogue of Exod 20 and Deut 5 by appealing to “familiar Dtn/Dtr usage”. Boling, 540.

³⁰⁹ Cf. Winther-Nielsen, 315; and Boling, 540.

³¹⁰ Cf. Ps 19:1-3.

³¹¹ Even the name, often semantically linked to the prophet’s ministry and times, yields little. It is probably of Akkadian origin according to some apparent association made with Assyrian *hambakuku*, the name of a garden plant. William H. Ward, “A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Habakkuk,” in *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Obadiah and Joel*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1985), 3.

³¹² While carrying food to reapers in harvest time, an angel seizes Habakkuk by the hair and takes him to Babylon where the food is given to Daniel in the lion’s den (cp. Dan. 6:10-24) and then the angel

This has generated much debate about the times and referents in his prophecies. In addition, the fact that Chapter 3 apparently differs with the first two³¹³ has generated much debate regarding the continuity of the material. However, theories of discontinuity with the first two chapters are complicated by the fact that the chapter is present in all the LXX manuscripts and it has been found in a number of texts from the third and second centuries BC.³¹⁴

The material suggests a specific historical context. Mention of the Chaldeans as “Yahweh’s ministers of correction”³¹⁵ suggests a Babylonian threat and hence a seventh century date.³¹⁶ Several commentators and historians consider the reign of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah whose reign corresponds with the rising threat of the Babylonians until Judah’s demise, to be the social-historical context for the prophecies of Habakkuk or at least parts of it.³¹⁷

Others consider different *Sitze im Leben*. For example, Watts, driven by form-critical exegesis, concludes that the book of the Twelve is composed of “arrangements of prophetic words linked to use in worship”, “collected over a period of more than 300 years” and “given their final shape not later than the middle of the fifth century.”³¹⁸ Here, the prophet in worship is a de facto redactor of existing prophecies for cultic use.³¹⁹ Apparently, such is most prophetic literature of the latter half of the sixth

returns him to Judah. Habakkuk is a son of Joshua of the tribe of Levi. John D. W. Watts, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah*, ed. P. R. Ackroyd, A. R. C. Leaney, and J. W. Packer, *The Cambridge Bible Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 121-122.

³¹³ For Ward, the psalm is not generically connected with the first two chapters. Ward, 3. For Baker, it is probably a secondary addition to the book because the Qumran material includes a commentary on the first two chapters, but not the third. David W. Baker, *Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah*, ed. D. J. Wiseman, *The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 46. Cf. W. H. Brownlee, *The Midrash of Peshier of Habbakuk* (Georgia, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1979). For Day, this simply evidences its independent circulation, not exclusion. Day, 105.

³¹⁴ Baker, 46. Cf. W. H. Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran*, JBL Monograph Series, vol. 11 (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 1959), 92; and J. T. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judea*, trans. J. Strugnell (London: SCM Press, 1959), 14, 18.

³¹⁵ Ward, 3. Cf. Hab 1:5-11.

³¹⁶ Cf. Watts, 9-10.

³¹⁷ W. F. Albright, “The Psalm of Habakkuk,” in *Studies in Old Testament Prophecy*, ed. H. H. Rowley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1957), 1. Cf. Watts, 122-123. and Baker, 44. However, Ward suggests that the second complaint (Hab 1:11-17) reflects a later time during the captivity. Ward, 5.

³¹⁸ Watts, 1.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

century (Isa 40-45) and the first half of the fifth century (Isa 56-66, Zech 9-14, Malachi, Obadiah and Joel). Editors noted the names and dates of prophets whose prophecies were closely linked to historical events. Those that elicited no specific dating, such as Habakkuk, were “interspersed in the existing collection of dated prophecies.”³²⁰

Therefore, Habakkuk is a liturgical expansion of the form ‘foreign prophecy’ (i.e. against foreign nations) and patterned after similar collections in Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. It is patterned after the emphasis of the ‘crisis prophets’ of the eighth century and those of the turn-of-the-seventh to the sixth centuries who proclaimed ‘the day of the Lord’ with ‘overpowering emphasis on God’s judgement on Israel’. They interpreted the Assyrian (721 B.C.) and the Babylonian (597 B.C.) conquests in theological terms.³²¹

As prophetic liturgy, the person of the speaker, like the psalms, is irrelevant, hence the paucity of detail concerning Habakkuk. This reconstruction, perhaps aided by the identity of the prophet in *Daniel, Bel and the Snake*, leads Watts to adopt the view that Habakkuk was one of the Levites who conducted worship in Jerusalem and who probably adapted this book for temple worship.³²²

However, Childs dismisses a cultic *Sitz im Leben* based on the autobiographical framework of the book noting that such a framework does not lend itself to a cultic setting.³²³ Others equally not convinced about the institution of the cult prophet in Israel still entertain the possibility that Habakkuk the prophet was also a ‘singer’ or ‘poet-musician.’³²⁴ The following exposition will assume Jehoiakim’s reign and events surrounding it as the *Sitz im Leben* for the book.

Habakkuk takes God’s justice for granted.³²⁵ He is prayerful and devout.³²⁶ His questions for God and their answers structure the book. The first question relates to

³²⁰ Ibid., 3.

³²¹ Ibid., 4-5.

³²² Ibid., 6, 122. Cf. Day, 105; and Ward, 6, 7 (third chapter only).

³²³ Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 452. Apparently, this framework is evidenced by such texts as 1:2-4, 1:5-11, 1:12-17, 2:1-5, 3:1-2 and 3:16-19 which indicate a dialogue between God and the prophet.

³²⁴ E.g. Albright, *Yahweh*, 188.

³²⁵ 1:13.

³²⁶ 1:2, 4, 12; 2:1.

Yahweh's apparent toleration of sin.³²⁷ God promises to punish Israel using the Babylonian or Neo-Chaldean Empire as his instrument.³²⁸ The prophet then questions the justice of using a more decadent nation to chastise a less decadent one.³²⁹ God promises judgement of Babylon.³³⁰ The prophet responds in a 'prayer' (תפלה).³³¹

D.2. Analytical Commentary

We interpret Hab 3 as a psalm and therefore according to the conventions governing Hebrew poetry using the functional³³² poetic analysis in Appendix VII as our exegetical guide.

The musical terms 'upon the *Shigyonoth*'³³³ and 'with my musical instrument' (בנגינותי)³³⁴ perhaps an *inclusio*, and the musical directions interspersed within the text³³⁵ characterise it as a psalm.

3:2

The vocatives³³⁶ rhetorically pair the first two cola. The disjunctive accents³³⁷ over 'Yahweh' suggest that the vocatives stand alone, at the start of their cola. Meanwhile, the prepositions³³⁸ group the last three cola together.

³²⁷ 1:2-4.

³²⁸ 1:5-11.

³²⁹ 1:12-17.

³³⁰ 2:2-20.

³³¹ 3:1. Cf. Ralph L. Smith, *Micah - Malachi*, ed. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 32 (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1984), 95.

³³² Our goal is to highlight the rhetorical dynamics in the text. Albright, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 10-12.

³³³ 3:1. Cf. שִׁיְיוֹן, Ps 7:1, perhaps "a wild, passionate song with rapid changes of rhythm." BDB, 993.

³³⁴ 3:19. Cf. Job 3:9; Ps 4:1; 6:1; 54:1; 55:1; 61:1; 67:1; 69:13; 76:1; 77:7; Isa 38:20; Lam 3:14; and 5:14 where the noun means 'song' or 'music'.

³³⁵ 'Selah' (סֶלָה), 3:3, 9, and 13. Other than here and in Lam 1:15, the term is exclusive to the Psalms occurring there 71 times. Cf. Elizabeth Achtemeier, *Nahum - Malachi*, ed. James Luther Mays, Interpretation (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1986), 33; and Baker, 51-53.

We nuance ‘your report’ (שִׁמְעָךְ) as ‘your fame’ since the prophet is presumably referring to received oral (שִׁמְעָ) tradition concerning Yahweh’s prowess. ‘Fame’ resumes in B₁ as ‘your deeds’.³³⁹ Likewise, we may nuance ‘I was afraid’ as ‘I stand in awe’ to reflect a re-discovered reverence in the light of the questions in the first two chapters.³⁴⁰ B₁, B₂ and B₃ are logically appeals (hence ‘renew them’, make them known’ and ‘remember’)³⁴¹ for a fresh manifestation of this greatness ‘in the midst of the years’ (שָׁנִים, בְּקֶרֶב, 2B₁ and B₂), ‘in wrath’ (בְּרִיז, 2B₃) i.e. the ungodly present.³⁴²

Reading ‘wrath’ (רִיז, B₃) in relation to ‘the midst of the years’ requires that we understand it as the ‘violence’ (חֵסֶד, 1:2) of ungodliness in the land. However, the tendency has been to associate B₃ with the prophet’s plea for mercy in reaction to the revelation of divine judgement to come on his people and the Babylonians.³⁴³

3:3-15

These verses constitute the psalm proper because God and his acts, an ‘exposition’ of ‘your fame’ (שִׁמְעָךְ, 2A) and ‘your deeds’ (פַּעֲלֶךְ, 2B₁), are the subjects.³⁴⁴ The language suggests that several ‘deeds’ have been marshalled together and celebrated

³³⁶ ‘Oh Yahweh!’ 3:2A, B₁.

³³⁷ *R^{ebt} magnum*. BHS.

³³⁸ B₁, B₂, B₃. According to Watson, בְּקֶרֶב here is a *reversed ballast preposition* of בְּ, an expanded (compound) version that suggests considered word pairs. Watson, 345.

³³⁹ Understood as ‘doing’, the single noun פַּעַל can stand for the multiplicity of acts of intervention that formed part of Israel’s received tradition. Cf. Watts, 145; Baker, 69; Smith, *Micah - Malachi*, 115., and Albright, “Psalm of Habakkuk,” 12. However, Achtemeier identifies ‘report’ with the response of Yahweh to the prophet (2:6-20). Achtemeier, 53.

³⁴⁰ Some have amended ‘fear’ (יִרָא) with ‘see’ (רָאָה) for various reasons, including ‘giving a more appropriate sense as well as a perfect parallelism’. Ward, 20.

³⁴¹ We read תִּזְכֹּר and תִּזְכֹּרֶנּוּ in B₁, B₂ and B₃ as three ways of expressing the same plea.

³⁴² Some commentators see ‘the midst of the years’ as a reference to the prophet’s times. Watts, 145. Others as referring to the autumn festival celebrated as a New year’s feast. Ward, 20; Smith, *Micah - Malachi*, 115; and Baker, 69.

³⁴³ E.g. Achtemeier argues that 3:2 and 3:16 belong together as “the prophet’s shaken and yet faithful reaction to 2:4, 5-6a [and] 6b-20.” Achtemeier, 54. Cf. Watts, 146; and Baker, 69.

³⁴⁴ This portion has been variously called a ‘vision of Habakkuk’ (Smith, *Micah - Malachi*, 116.); a combination of an adaptation of the theophany of Yahweh as exhibited in the south-east storm – vv.3-7 – and an adaptation from an early poem or poems of Canaanite origin, celebrating the triumph of Baal over Judge River, Prince Sea and Death, all serving as variant names of a single primordial dragon of chaos – vv.8-15 – (Albright, “Psalm of Habakkuk,” 8-9.); ‘the approach’ – vv.3-7 – and ‘battle’ – vv.14 – (Watts, 146-150.); and a ‘theophany’ (Ward, 21.).

as Yahweh's fame. This psalm need not be a vision.³⁴⁵ It probably is retrospective, a recital of past traditions in the light of renewed confidence. The meter³⁴⁶ is clear enough and in our poetic analysis, we have supplied the same letters with numerical subscripts where it is evident.³⁴⁷ A greater challenge is to ascertain the events reflected in the poetic verse.

3:3-6

We consider these verses together because the theme 'the coming of God' binds them together.³⁴⁸ The gender-matched synonymous parallelism in 3B₁ and 3B₂ also evidences a *merismus*.³⁴⁹ Coupled with the verbs,³⁵⁰ the import of these rhetorical features is a 'coming' of cosmic proportions not quite matched by some historical event in the biblical narratives.³⁵¹

For Day, however, v.5 is part of multiple historicizations of God's conflict with the dragon and the sea in Hab 3. The personification of 'plague' and 'pestilence' evoke the Canaanite plague-god Resheph. Here, Resheph has been demoted to a kind of demon in Yahweh's entourage.³⁵²

There is biblical precedent for 'Yahweh coming from Teman and from Mount Seir' as references to Mount Sinai.³⁵³ 'Pestilence' (דִּבְרָה, 5A) and 'fire bolt' (רֶשֶׁף, 5B)

³⁴⁵ E.g. Achtemeier, 56; Smith, *Micah - Malachi*, 116.

³⁴⁶ Meter is generally defined as a form of rhythm. S. M. Chatman, *A Theory of Meter* (The Hague: Mouton, 1965), 18.

³⁴⁷ See Appendix VII.

³⁴⁸ For this reason, some commentators regard it as a theophany.

³⁴⁹ In B₁, 'Glory' (הוֹד) and 'heavens' (שָׁמַיִם) are masculine nouns while in B₂, 'praise' (תְּהִלָּה) and 'earth' (אֶרֶץ) are feminine. In addition, 'heavens'/'earth' is a *merismus* for the whole world. The point of these features therefore, is to express *merismus*. Cf. Watson, 31.

³⁵⁰ 'Covered' (כִּסָּה) and 'full' (מִלֵּא).

³⁵¹ Baker, 71., understands the *merismus* to mean his splendour and praise fill the whole creation. Cf. Watts, 147. Possible historical referents include the theophany at Mount Sinai, "Yahweh's advance to help Israel in Exodus and conquest" (Baker, 70; Ward, 22-23.); and a new vision in answer to the prophet's 'petition' in 3:2.

³⁵² Day, 106.

³⁵³ Deut 33:3. 'Came from Sinai' is in apposition to 'rose from Seir' and 'shone forth from Mount Paran'. Cf. Judg 5:4 and Isa 21:11.

conceivably evoke the Exodus and Mount Sinai.³⁵⁴ The Psalmist, for instance, depicts Yahweh as coming to his aid surrounded by ‘brightness’ (בְּנֹרָה, cf. 4A) and with ‘hail’ (בָּרָד, 5A, in Ps 78:48 a synonym of רֶבֶר) and ‘coals of fire’ (וַיִּחַלֵּי־אֵשׁ) in attendance.³⁵⁵ Further, the language of the physical world reacting to Yahweh’s presence, including anthropomorphically, (3:6A₁-B₂) appears in lawgiver, psalmist and prophet.³⁵⁶

Together, 3:3-6 is probably part of poetic recital of how Yahweh manifested (‘came’) at Sinai extended to represent any ‘coming to the aid of his people’.³⁵⁷ However, the spectacle of a god or a king accompanied by attendants is present in both Greek and oriental thought.³⁵⁸ Likewise, as Ward notes, older Babylonian art often represented solar deities with rays³⁵⁹ proceeding from the body.³⁶⁰ This raises the question of how worldview and cosmology influence appropriation, a matter for the following chapter.

3:7

We discuss v.7 separately to capture its transitional nature from ‘the coming’ to ‘the consequences of the coming’. The turbulence experienced by Cush and Midian is indicative of that experienced by the creation and the nations.³⁶¹ Interestingly, the

³⁵⁴ Cf. Exod 5:3; 9:3, 15; Num 14:12; Ps 78:50 (רָעַד) and Ps 78:48 (רָעַד, pl.). ‘Thunder’ (קֶלֶח, lit. ‘sounds’), ‘hail’ (בָּרָד, cf. Ps 78:48) mixed with ‘fire’ (אֵשׁ), Exod 9:23, 24, could be a variation of ‘thunder bolt’ (רָעַד).

³⁵⁵ Ps 18:6, 12 (MT 7, 13). Cf. 2 Sam 22:3-15.

³⁵⁶ E.g. Judg 5:4-5; Ps 68:7-8; 77:17; and Ps 97:5.

³⁵⁷ Cf. Achtemeier, 54; Baker, 71.

³⁵⁸ Ward, 22. For Baker, the facts that the deity is Yahweh and the attendants, *plague* and *pestilence* (pestilence and fire bolt), his attendants, are also Canaanite deities, indicates “a hidden polemic against pagan worship, since these are not self-existent divine beings, but rather physical manifestations acting under divine orders”. Baker, 71.

³⁵⁹ ‘Rays’ is his preferred rendering for ‘horns’ (קַרְנִים, 4B) and may be supported by the reference to ‘brightness like light’ in 4A. Ward and Smith have ‘twin rays’. Ward, 22., and Smith, *Micah - Malachi*, 112. Cf. BDB, 902, 5.

³⁶⁰ 3:4B. Thus, he amends the text to read ‘from his side’ as opposed to ‘from his hand’ in keeping with ‘the older Babylonian art’. Ward, 22. Cf. Watts, 146.

³⁶¹ Cf. the referents in 12A and B. Ward suggests that Cush and Midian are mentioned since they ‘first feel the terror of the theophany, as nearest to Mount Paran.” Ward, 22. Cf. Smith, *Micah - Malachi*, 116.

reaction of Cush and Midian is presented in a way that suggests the prophet's presence and witness.³⁶²

3:8-15

Three features bind this section together. First, other than 8A, the rest of the verse manifests or assumes 2.m.s. references to Yahweh. Second, the rationale for 'the coming' of Yahweh introduced by the rhetorical questions in 8A, B₁ and B₂ and answered in 13A₁ and A₂ governs the material. Yahweh 'came' for the deliverance of his people. Third, is the language of 'deliverance'.

Rhetorical questions invite reflection and are powerful mnemonic devices. Thus, 8A, B₁ and B₂ naturally lead to a recital of a narrative (or narratives) of deliverance albeit in poetic verse.³⁶³

Parallels between 3:3-15 and Ps 77 have generated much exegetical discussion. Ward, for instance, regards the current material to be earlier than Ps 77³⁶⁴ but proceeds to amend Hab 3:10-12, 15 using Ps 77:17-20.³⁶⁵ Therefore, it is the 'waters' (מַיִם, Ps 77:17A)³⁶⁶ that saw Yahweh and 'writhed' (וַיִּחַלְוּ, 10A, cf. Ps 77:17B), not the 'mountains' (הָרִים, 10A).³⁶⁷ 'A flood' (מַבּוּל, 10B) becomes 'dark clouds' (עָנָנִים, Ps 77:18A), strengthening the idea that these cover the sun and moon (11A).³⁶⁸ This paves the way for understanding Ps 77:19B – 'Lightnings lit the world' – for the rather difficult 'for brightness, the glitter of your spear' (11B₂).³⁶⁹ Finally, he moves v.15 to follow vv.10-11 "as it continues in order the series of expressions found in Ps. 77¹⁷⁻²⁰".³⁷⁰ However, other commentators have noted the "unmistakable literary

³⁶² 3:7A, 'I saw' (רָאִיתִי). Cf. Ward, 22.

³⁶³ Vv.3:9A-12B, 13B₁-15B.

³⁶⁴ However, see Albright, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 9, note 29.

³⁶⁵ Apparently, they are also different appropriations. Ps 77 intended to recall the escape of Israel from Egypt "while Habakkuk makes no reference to Israelite history, but simply presents a theophany of judgement under the figure of a storm". Ward, 23.

³⁶⁶ See the poetic analysis and commentary on Ps 77:17-20.

³⁶⁷ In his judgement, this makes better connection of thought with Hab 3:8. Ward, 23.

³⁶⁸ Ibid. "The passing of the *tempest* [מַבּוּל] is no cause for fear."

³⁶⁹ Ibid., 23-24.

affinity between Ps. lxxvii. 17ff. and Hab. iii. 10ff³⁷¹ without seeing the need for amending one text based on the other. Indeed, there is no reason the two texts should not be different appropriations of the same traditions.³⁷²

Day resolves the problematic of the language in this section by amending ‘oaths’ (שבעות, 9B) to ‘seven’ (שבעת)

So that we have here a reference to Yahweh’s seven shafts of arrows of lighting, comparable to his seven thunders depicted in Ps. 29. This parallelism with Ps. 29 is in keeping with the close relationship between them generally: both refer to Yahweh’s theophany in the storm (Hab. 3:3-4, 9, 11 and *passim*; Ps. 3-9), including an allusion to the Sinai theophany (Hab. 3:3; Ps. 29:8), Yahweh’s exaltation over the cosmic sea (Hab. 3:8-10, 15; Ps. 29:3, 10) and the upheaval of nature at Yahweh’s appearing (Hab. 3:6-7, 10-11; Ps. 29:5-9).³⁷³

In addition, he sees 8C, D and 15A, references to riding upon horses, chariots of victory, and treading through the sea on horses, as mythological allusions to Baal’s horses drawing his (cloud) chariot, themselves evoked in the battle between Zeus and the serpent or dragon Tryphon.³⁷⁴

Clearly, the language uses imagery that both revivifies the drama of and evokes extra-biblical traditions. Thus, dark, stormy clouds overshadowing the sun and moon are recast in anthropomorphic terms.³⁷⁵ The sun and moon stand in their heights (11A) while flashes of lightning, the arrows of Yahweh (11B₁) and his ‘glittering spear’ (11B₂) illuminate the universe (11B₂). This imagery (‘arrows’ and ‘spear’) transforms these phenomena into expressions of Yahweh’s ‘indignation’ (12A).

³⁷⁰ For similarities between 15A-B and Ps 77:20, and thus evidence of this continuity, compare ‘you trod through the sea (on) your horses’ (הִרְכַּבְתָּ בָּיָם כִּסְיֶךָ, 15A) with ‘your way appeared in the sea’ (הִרְכַּבְתָּ בָּיָם, Ps 77:20A); ‘A heap of many waters’ (חֹמֶר מַיִם רַבִּים, 15B) with ‘and your paths in the many waters’ (וּשְׁבִילֶיךָ בְּמַיִם רַבִּים, Ps 77:20B).

³⁷¹ Albright, “Psalm of Habakkuk,” 6, 9.

³⁷² Thus, for instance, Achtemeier regards the prophet Habakkuk to be responsible for the hymn’s (3:3-15) placement in this corpus although she suggests that it was an independent piece in the cult. Achtemeier, 54.

³⁷³ Day, 274. This leads him to read 9A-B as “Utterly laid bare are your bow and seven arrows with a word”. He regards the LXX’s ἐπὶ (τῷ) ἀκαήπτρα, apparently a corruption of ἐπὶ ἀκαήπτρα or ἐπὶ ἐπτα ἀκαήπτρα as evidence that the MT originally read מְשֻׁבָּח שְׁבַע rather than מְשֻׁבָּח שֶׁבַע. Day, 106-107.

³⁷⁴ “It may be conjectured that Baal, like Zeus in the Typhon conflict, had winged horses drawing his cloud-chariot, the horses being reflected in Hab. 3:8, 15 and the wings in Ps. 18:11 (ET 10) and 104:3.” Day, 107-108.

³⁷⁵ Cf. Ps 77:18A-19B.

Rather than seeking to amend these expressions (as Ward above), we must have here a different imagery, possibly that suggested by Day above, that complements and enriches that found in Ps 77 for the same phenomena.

‘Your people’ (עַמֶּךָ, 13A₁) are ‘your anointed’ (מְשִׁיחֶךָ, 13A₂), evoking the covenantal status of Israel.³⁷⁶ This fluidly becomes ‘me’ (pr.suf., לִּי־פִּצְצִי, 14B), inviting individual appropriation but also preserving reference to the plural singular ‘people’ (עַם) preceding.

The extra-biblical traditions evoked by 3:3-15 are the same ones we encountered in Ps 77, Baal confronting Yam.³⁷⁷ Imagery from those traditions includes the crushing of the head of the sea monster, Leviathan.³⁷⁸ However, ‘the house of the wicked’ (13B₁) has replaced Yam.³⁷⁹

There is, therefore, an apparent appropriation of Yahweh’s acts in Israel’s traditions using imagery borrowed from Canaanite traditions.³⁸⁰ For Day, this is an example of the historicization of the divine conflict with the dragon and the sea whereby “various names of the dragon and the sea are applied to a nation hostile to Israel”.³⁸¹ These acts are meant to celebrate the motif of Yahweh’s ‘coming’ to deliver Israel, likely both in retrospect (Yahweh’s ‘fame’, שִׁמְעֶךָ, 2A) and in anticipation (2:2-20). The acts reflect allusions³⁸² to several ‘comings’ in Israel’s traditions, including the Exodus, Sinai and the wilderness wanderings.

³⁷⁶ Others see this as evoking the Davidic king who reigned in Jerusalem, Jehoiakim. Watts, 150. However, if we understand 13A₁ and A₂ as synonymous parallelism, we must regard ‘your anointed one’ to be a variation of ‘your people’. Thus, the Jewish recensions of the LXX, following it, make ‘anointed one’ plural. Ward, 24.

³⁷⁷ Cf. Albright, “Psalm of Habakkuk,” 6. See Day’s theories above for additional possibilities.

³⁷⁸ Cf. Ps 74:13, 14; 89:9-10.

³⁷⁹ Cf. Achtemeier, 32, 58.

³⁸⁰ Baker thinks that Israel borrowed the motif without adopting any idea that natural phenomena are personified deities. Baker, 72.

³⁸¹ Given the probable date of Habakkuk, the hostile power is presumably the Babylonians. Day, 88, 105.

³⁸² We agree with Ward’s judgement that Hab 3 “is not a *recounting* of past triumphs, and contains only *covert allusions* to early Hebrew history”. However, we disagree with his conclusion that, “Habakkuk makes no reference to Israelite history, but simply presents a theophany of judgement under the figure of a storm”. Ward, 19, 23., (italics, mine).

3:16-19

This section, the doxology, depicts the prophet's response in renewed faith (19A-B₂) in spite of³⁸³ Yahweh's impending 'coming in judgement' (16C).³⁸⁴ We note the phenomenological depiction of this reaction. A trembling belly (16A₁), quivering lips (16A₂), a deflated physical demeanour (16B₁)³⁸⁵ and trembling legs (16B₂) are graphic images and symptoms of an internal state of turmoil. We also note the social-historical and holistic nature of the indicators of divine displeasure. Fig trees that do not bud in season (17A₁), vine trees that do not produce fruit (17A₂), olive trees that do not yield (17A₃), fields that do not yield bountiful harvests (17A₄), enclosures devoid of flocks (17A₅) and stalls devoid of herds (17A₆) have one thing in common. They all assume a correlation between the physical processes of nature, the vicissitudes and exigencies of life in Israel and Yahweh.³⁸⁶

Hab 3, then, is a psalm. It follows the dialogue between the prophet and Yahweh in the preceding chapters. There, Yahweh countered the prophet's concerns by promising retribution for those perpetuating injustice and judgement for his instrument of retribution. Here, the prophet refers to Yahweh's acts of deliverance in previous years, 'comings', to reflect his hope that the dearth of 'comings' will not endure forever. The 'comings' in questions are many and hard to identify decisively. His language evokes Canaanite and other myths. Possible 'comings' include events pertaining to the exodus, Sinai and the wilderness wanderings.

³⁸³ Thus, at the centre of this section are the protasis (17A₁-A₆) and the apodosis (18B₁-B₂).

³⁸⁴ Cf. Watts, 151. However, Ward interprets the response as fear of the approaching foe by the prophet. Ward, 25.

³⁸⁵ We understand 'bones' in this text as metaphor for 'strength' and 'decay' as a metaphor for 'frailty'. Cf. Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman, eds., 113, 199.

³⁸⁶ Day sees vv.17-19 as allusions to the fertility in nature following the divine victory over the sea, in which the king is involved, just as in Ps. 144. Cf. Ps. 65:8-14 (ET 7-13). Day, 124.

Chapter 7: Epistemology in the Appropriations and Re-Appropriations of the Exodus Event

Chapter 6 constituted the data evidencing select appropriations and re-appropriations of the Exodus event in the Old Testament. In this chapter, we review that data in the light of their perceived *Sitze im Leben* with a view to delineate the epistemological associations discernible in them. The ensuing epistemological associations and valuation assume the OT epistemological framework discussed in Chapter 2 for all the texts examined in the preceding chapter.

This premise stems from the assumption that all the social groups in the Ancient Near East share a common worldview¹ in spite of geographic, political, social-cultural and linguistic differences in the region, the effects of syncretism between them and with non-Semitic cultures, and in spite of the transformation of all these with time.²

We saw how foundational to the existence of the nation of Israel the Exodus tradition was.³ We assume, therefore, a lengthy history of appropriation before its final form in the MT for such is the usual fare of founding traditions.⁴ We assume this in spite of Van Seters' argument that diversity of material included in the narratives and meta-narratives in the Old Testament does not necessarily reflect 'a multistage traditio-historical process'. He suspects a borrowing from Greek prose conventions of the day where the 'authors' (or 'author') often linked together disparate material in genre and style, in size and complexity of structure, and in *refinement* in the service of their narrative agendas. As such, any composition probably says more about the 'authors'' sources than it does about the growth of traditions in stages since form of a

¹ For an early but still valid characterisation of societies of the Ancient Near East, see Louis Wallis, *Sociological Study of the Bible* (Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 1912), 38-39.

² Foreign influences on Biblical Hebrew (the Hebrew used in the composition of Scripture as well as in the MT) include the Neo-Babylonian Empire, 625-540; Persian Empire, 540-330; and Roman Empire, 60 B.C.E. – 330 C.E.). The use of the Hebrew language goes back to the time of Moses, the archaeological era known as the Late Bronze Age II, 1400-1200 B.C.E.). Waltke and O'Connor, 3, 57-60.

³ Cf. *Sitz im Leben* of the Song at the Sea, p. 158.

⁴ Cf. Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997), 8.

unit does not necessarily say anything about the age of its contents.⁵ Therefore, in keeping with those conventions (in particular, his examination of Herodotus), he ascribes a strong element of invention to the ‘authors’ in the Old Testament, even where they explicitly allude to sources.⁶

While we appreciate that there could be similarities in literary conventions between Greek historiography and the Old Testament, we do not ascribe, based on these similarities, the fictitious inventiveness of Herodotus to the ‘mnemohistory’ in the Old Testament. In fact, some ascribe the founding of historiography to Israel, earlier still than Herodotus.⁷ Further, given that ‘participant observation’⁸ is impossible for the ancient Israelite and early Jewish society in which the Bible originated, we consider comparative ethnography a very useful tool for approximating grounded research of biblical societies. Finally, it is misleading to argue that oral traditions should not apply to literary traditions as though there is a significant divide between orality and literacy.⁹

We also assume that the location of all the texts in the MT is part of an ideological meta-narrative.¹⁰ In the following analyses, we carefully review each appropriation for worldview or epistemological constitution indicators. The collective picture that emerges will form the basis in Chapter 8 for comparing the epistemological

⁵ John Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983), 37-38. For a discussion of indicators of authenticity and age of tradition in Gunkel’s theory and his influence on scholarship, see J. A. Wilcoxon, “Narrative,” in *Old Testament Form Criticism*, ed. J. H. Hayes (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1974), 62ff.

⁶ Seters, *In Search of History*, 47-49. He considers it “highly questionable” to use functional explanations based on anthropological analysis of oral societies as windows into understanding aspects of the Old Testament. Cf. Yairah Amit, *History and Ideology: An Introduction to Historiography in the Hebrew Bible* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 23; and R. R. Wilson, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977), 138-166.

⁷ Amit, 23-33.

⁸ The method in Anthropological research whereby the researchers learn the languages of their study groups and live amongst them for an extended period of time in order to understand them and their cultural products. Bernhard Lang, ed., *Anthropological Approaches to the Old Testament*, ed. Douglas Knight and Robert Morgan, *Issues in Religion and Theology* 8 (Philadelphia and London: Fortress Press and SPCK, 1985), 2.

⁹ For an extensive critique of this assumption and the error of misrepresenting ancient literacy as synonymous with literacy in the modern world, see Susan Niditch, *Oral World and Written Word: Ancient Israelite Literature* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 1-7.

¹⁰ ‘Mnemohistory’, reception theory of phenomena of collective memory with an agenda. Assmann, 9-10.

constitution in these appropriations with that extracted from the African data in Chapter 5.

Just as we read Exodus 1-14 as antecedent to the Song based on their association in the MT, we include an epistemological analysis of the narrative in our evaluation of underlying epistemology in the biblical data. The association inferred by the place of the Song in relation to the narrative in the text warrants such inclusion at the epistemological and worldview levels.

The midwives disobey pharaoh's orders in implicit fashion. They do not refuse 'to his face' but do nothing about his instructions. When queried, they offer a rationale that sounds plausible enough to dissuade pharaoh from retribution, yet implausible enough to lead pharaoh to seek other means for stemming the birth of male children.¹¹ Meanwhile, the narrator is clear that their intention was disobedience because they feared God.¹²

Apparently, both parties knew exactly what was going on. From his reaction,¹³ pharaoh knew that they were not willing to carry out his orders. Similarly, we may postulate that the midwives knew that pharaoh was not fooled by their answer hence the decision to bypass their agency in the destruction of Hebrew male children. All this suggests an environment where hierarchical structures are so strong that communication, particularly from the lesser to the greater in hierarchical terms, happens at an implicit level. The critical skill needed for understanding this sort of communication is discernment. Only top down communication may be explicit, 'to the face'. If it is from the lesser to the greater and yet 'to the face', there must be strong grounds for it. We will continue to allude to this principle in the analyses that follow.

Moses continues to identify intensely with the Hebrews in spite of his 'adoption' by the daughter of pharaoh. This is particularly important because we established fairly reasonably that his motivation at that point was not fear of Yahweh¹⁴ but kinship with the Hebrews. His encounter, the basis of his 'knowledge' (ידע) of Yahweh, was

¹¹ Cf. p. 164, note 113.

¹² Exod 1:17. God was pleased with this subversive action. Exod 1:20-21.

¹³ Pharaoh re-issued the order to his people (as opposed to the midwives) to cast every Hebrew male child born into the river. Exod 1:22

¹⁴ Cf. pp. 156 and 164.

still future. This suggests that the bonds of kinship and ethnicity are stronger than that of adoption.

A. Epistemology in the Song at the Sea

Poetic language and figurative imagery feature prominently in references to the Exodus narrative in the Song. This suggests an epistemological constitution that allows for extended latitude in conceptual and linguistic expression. This latitude, no doubt, is responsible for such features as expressing the same thought in the active and in the passive in related poetic metre¹⁵, employing mythical images for already stated phenomena¹⁶ and dramatic re-enactment using thought processes not explicitly indicated in the narrative¹⁷. It is also responsible for such figures as simile¹⁸, metaphor¹⁹, possible extension of meaning²⁰ and personification.²¹ Finally, it is responsible for the aesthetic framing of the Song.²²

The ensuing 'poetic narrative' parallels the narrative in Exodus 14 albeit with actors, actions and elements that have been recast using borrowed imagery from surrounding cultures or, as Wyatt suggested, from commonly held traditions.²³ For instance, Yahweh, a man of war (5A) counters the enemy's offensive against Israel (9-10A-G) with a 'blast of the nostrils' (8A) that induces 'the deep' to 'congeal' (8B₂) and the enemy to 'sink in the majestic waters' (9-10J).

¹⁵ E.g. 5A vs. 5B.

¹⁶ 'Sea' (בָּיִת, 4A) and 'Sea of Reeds' (בְּיַם־סוּף, 4B) vs. "'depths' (תְּהוֹמֹת, 5A, and בְּמַצּוֹלֹת, 5B) or 'floods like a heap' (קְמוּרֵי־נָזְלִים, 8B₁) vs. 'the depths congealed' (קָפְאוּ תְּהוֹמֹת, 8B₂).

¹⁷ 9-10A-G.

¹⁸ 'Like a stone' (5B, 16B), 'like chaff' (7C), 'like a heap' (8B₁) and 'like lead' (9-10J).

¹⁹ 'Blast of the nostrils' (8A cf. 9-10H), 'right hand' (6A, B, 12-13A) and 'melt' (14-15F).

²⁰ 'Choice officers' (4B), a characterisation not quite corroborated by the narrative. According to Exod 14:7, it is the 'chariots' (רֶכֶב) that are 'choice' (בְּחֹרִי), not the 'officers' (שָׂרִים).

²¹ תְּהוֹמֹת, 5A, 8C, בְּמַצּוֹלֹת, 5B and אֲדִירִים, 9-10J.

²² Cf. p. 173 note 173.

²³ Cf. p. 160.

The protagonists are ‘Moses and the children of Israel’ (1A, B) yet with singular verbs.²⁴ Although this construction is grammatically possible, it could also indicate epistemological fluidness of identity between the many and the one, the group and the individual, particularly where common perception or consensus is assumed.

However, it is conceivable that the singular in the poetic sections of the Song (as opposed to background sections in the poetic narrative)²⁵ may be permissible by the *genre* i.e. poetry may express plural subjects or objects with the singular.²⁶

Therefore, plural subjects²⁷ with plural verbs²⁸ and pronominal object suffixes²⁹ *within the same genre* evidence liberties of expression within a genre. They do not evidence inattention to correspondences in number between nouns and verbs. Either way, this epistemological constitution apparently has no problem with interchanging the singular with the plural in appropriation, respect for genre notwithstanding.

The infinitive absolute³⁰ evidences the linguistic phenomenon that repetition of a semantic unit indicates emphasis.³¹ In this case, the infinitive absolute is intensifying the meaning denoted by the verb נָאָה. This represents an instance of phenomenological conceptual indicators to communicate emphasis (the same semantic entity twice) as opposed to semantic indicators although the latter are also used.³²

²⁴ *Wa'eqtals*, 1C₁, 2B₁ and B₂ and first person pronominal suffixes, note 105, p. 163. However, see the grammatical possibility of a singular verb for a plural subject in note 106 on the same page.

²⁵ E.g. 1A-B, 19 B-D.

²⁶ 1C₂, ‘horse and his rider’ (סוס ורכבו), 2B₂, ‘the God of my father’ (אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי), 6B, 9-10 A ‘the enemy’ (אויב) the *qatal*, 9-10 A ‘he said’ (אָמַר) and all the *wa'eqtals*, 9-10 B-G.

²⁷ 4A, ‘Chariots’ (מִרְכָּבוֹת), 4B, ‘officers’ (שָׂרִים), 14-15 A ‘the people’ (עַמִּים), cf. D, E and F.

²⁸ 4B, ‘they sunk’ (טָבְעוּ), 5B, ‘they went down’ (יָרְדוּ), 9-10 J, ‘they sunk’ (צָלְלוּ), 14-15 D, ‘are terrified’ (נִבְהָלוּ) and 14-15 F, ‘melt’ (נָמְנוּ).

²⁹ 5A, ‘covered them’ (יִכְסֶּימוּ), 9-10 I, ‘covered them’ (כִּסְּמוּ), 12-13 B, ‘covers them’ (תִּכְלְעֵמוּ) and 14-15 E, ‘takes hold of them’ (יִאחֲזֵמוּ). Cf. 16 A.

³⁰ 1C₁, ‘surely exalted’ (נָאָה נָאָה).

³¹ Commenting on the phenomenon of repetition in the Hebrew Bible at a broader level, Niditch also regards it as “a means of metonymically emphasizing key messages and moods”. Niditch, 13. For a possible instance of emphasis attained by repeating a word, see Waltke and O'Connor, 319, 18.2.b7.

³² E.g. מָאָר, תִּרְכָּה, etc. Note however, that מָאָר מָאָר still intensifies the semantic meaning even further. See Gen 7:19; 30:43; Num 14:7; 1 Kgs 7:47; 2 Kgs 10:4; and Ezek 37:10. For other biblical examples of this phenomenon see Num 5:22; Neh 8:6; Ps 72:19; 89:53 (אֶמֶן אֶמֶן) and the multiple uses of this device in the Gospel of John (Ἀμήν ἁμήν, e.g. John 1:51; 3:3, 5, 11; 5:19, etc.) where we regard the Greek to be a literal translation of the Hebrew expression.

Further, the fact that ‘he is surely exalted’ (1C₁) as a reference to Yahweh’s acts pertaining to the Exodus is the *raison d’être* for knowing (2A₁-B₂) suggests that actions engender knowledge.³³ Before the Exodus, Yahweh was the God of their received tradition, of their ancestors (2B₂) but they did not ‘know’ (יָדַע) him. He was not a part of their experiences. In the Exodus, he revealed himself to them as ‘a man of war’ (3A, B), their ‘God’, their ‘strength’ and their ‘salvation’ and became their ‘song’ (2A₁-A₂). Now they are able to confess him as their God just like their fathers (2B₁-B₂). To support the notion that this experience was the basis for ‘knowing’, there is an extended celebration of the penultimate event, perhaps, because of its conclusiveness, representative of all the divine interventions leading to it in the exodus (4A-5B).

The priority and centrality of experience to knowledge is further demonstrated by the fact that all the ‘fathers’ in question ‘knew’ (יָדַע) Yahweh in encounters ranging from theophanies to miraculous answers to prayer.³⁴ As such, ‘the God of your fathers’ could be a way of saying ‘the God who acted on behalf of your fathers’. The very call of Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt is rooted in an extended encounter with Yahweh.³⁵ In addition, the ‘knowledge’ (יָדַע) of Yahweh by the elders and leaders of Israel, as also by pharaoh, was achieved by an escalation of ‘signs’ (מֹפְתִים)³⁶ culminating in the ultimate ‘sign’ at the Sea of Reeds. These associations demonstrate how ‘knowing’ (יָדַע) as cognitive awareness and embrace is rooted in experience, not detached rational reflection.

The protagonists use the term ‘father’ for ancestors. As a reference to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob³⁷, it represents ancestors several generations removed from the

³³ Thus, Von Rad notes that “The faith of Israel is invariably related to an event, a divine self-declaration in history: It originated in a response to divine acts and looked forward to divine acts.” Rad, *Hexateuch*, 144.

³⁴ The ‘fathers’ were Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Exod 3:6, 15, 16; 4:5; 6:3 etc. The following are some of the encounters that the ‘fathers’ had with Yahweh. Abraham: Gen 12:1-3 (conversation), Gen 12:7 (theophany), Gen 13:14-17 (conversation) and Gen 17:1-22 (child beyond childbearing age). Isaac: Gen 25:21ff (prayer for barren wife answered), Gen 26:2-6 (theophany). Jacob: Gen 28:16-20 (theophany at Bethel), Gen 29:36-41 cf. Gen 31:5-13 (the miracle of ring-streaked, speckled and spotted flocks), Gen 31:3 (theophany) and Gen 32:9-32 (‘Peniel’, the face of God).

³⁵ Exod 3-4:17.

³⁶ Cf. p. 156.

³⁷ These are the ones specifically mentioned in the Exodus narrative by both Yahweh and the children of Israel.

current stock and illustrates the elasticity of this filial term. Tellingly, we find Paul adopting the same perspective and terminology towards the exodus generation.³⁸ In that his letter is to Christians in Corinth (1 Cor 1:2), ἀδελφοί (1 Cor 10:1) includes Gentiles in this commonwealth, presumably at the spiritual level.³⁹ Clearly then, filial terms in this epistemological constitution are not restricted to biological definitions although inclusive of them.⁴⁰

In crediting Yahweh with the spectacle at the Sea of Reeds (4A, 12-13A-B), the protagonists evidence the understanding that he used the elements, ordered them even, to do his bidding.⁴¹ This suggests a worldview that places ‘natural’ circumstance under the volition of spiritual authority. For this reason, the winds (8A cf. 9-10H), the sea or depths (4A-5B) and floods (8A-C, 9-10H-J) do Yahweh’s bidding and are extensions of his ‘right hand’ (6A, B, 12-13A) and consequences of his anger (7B, C, 8A). It is this ‘majesty’ (7A), a demonstration of dominion, aligned with Israel’s cause that makes the nations to tremble (14-15A-F).⁴²

Starting with the rhetorical questions (11A-D), perhaps the start of the climb to the summit of the doxological elements of the Song, the protagonists address Yahweh directly, in the first person. This is a remarkable demonstration of awareness both of the presence of Yahweh with them and of the nature of their access to him.

In the light of our discussion concerning reticence and ‘to the face’ communication in hierarchical societies, we may presume that the boldness here is justified by nature of communication. They may address Yahweh ‘to the face’ because they are apportioning highest praise, so to speak. Such praise invites the adoption of lofty, poetic language. This stands in sharp contrast with the narrative where day-to-day consultation and communication with Yahweh were the preserve of Moses.⁴³

³⁸ Οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν πάντες, 1 Cor 10:1.

³⁹ Cf. Rom 4:13; Gal 3:26-29; 6:16.

⁴⁰ E.g. in metaphorical expressions, Judah is ‘sister’ to Israel (Jer 3:7, 8, 10); nations are ‘sisters’ (Ezek 16:46, 48, 49); ‘sister’, ‘mother’ and ‘brother’ apply to the brotherhood of faith (Matt 12:50; Mark 3:35; Rom 16:1; and 1 Cor 7:1).

⁴¹ See the discussion on p. 166.

⁴² Cf. p. 170. The rhetorical questions (11A-D) indicate that among the gods, Yahweh’s attributes as ‘majestic in holiness’, ‘awesome in praises’ and ‘a worker of wonders’ are unequalled.

⁴³ For the hierarchy Yahweh, Moses, Aaron, and the people, see Exod 4:15-16; 7:1. For the reverse version of this process, see Exod 5:20-6:13.

The above suggests the following. Hierarchical considerations were a part of the communication process with regard to Yahweh. Those at the lower end of this hierarchy could breach these considerations if the substance of their communication was lofty praise.⁴⁴ This justifies the use of poetic language and the lofty imagery in the Song for high praise attracts use of exalted linguistic symbols. For this reason, it is not anomalous for the protagonists to portray the 'sea covering the armies of pharaoh' (9-10I) in language of 'the earth swallowing them' (12-13B).⁴⁵

Given that some of this lofty language evokes traditions that predated Israel and were known in several contemporary societies, we encounter a functional use of known traditions where the ultimate referents are those intended by the user. Thus, the process of 'reworking'⁴⁶ both 'evokes' and 'creates' new applications and meanings.⁴⁷ We will encounter this phenomenon again when we analyse the epistemology in Habakkuk 3. It is not far-fetched therefore, that this 'borrowing' could at the same time subvert what it 'borrows' in the service of creation of new meanings.⁴⁸ The above suggests an epistemological continuum beyond Israel and involving creation of new meanings.

Those who spoke and acted on behalf of Yahweh were an extension of Yahweh's communications and actions. There is no anomaly, therefore, for the protagonists of the Song to understand Yahweh to be the one stretching out his right hand (12-13A), language that invites reference to Moses' stretched arm. This implies that the servant of a deity participated in the outworking of the deity's acts. It is logical to suppose that Moses also shared in Yahweh's reverence and authority in the estimation of his peers.⁴⁹ The deity intrudes in societal affairs through his servants thereby elevating them to portfolios that approximate that of the deity.

⁴⁴ For a discussion of the mood of the Song, see the discussion on pp. 172-173.

⁴⁵ For support that this is the intended meaning of this rendering, see the discussion on p. 170, especially Cassuto's views in note 156.

⁴⁶ Cf. Wyatt, p. 160.

⁴⁷ Compare this with Smith's claims on p. 161 (note 95) that the cosmic battle used in the first section of the Baal cycle is 'exploited politically' at Mari to express divine support for the monarchy. He also suggests that even its presence at Ugarit could be for political use. Also, see Day's 'historicization' by analogical extension on pp. 161 and 171-172.

⁴⁸ Cf. Cassuto, p. 160.

⁴⁹ For this reason, Yahweh informed Moses that he was to be to Aaron 'instead of God'. Exod 4:16. Cf. Exod 7:1. For this reason also, Moses spoke in the name of Yahweh. Exod 5:23.

In seeing this song as a community event,⁵⁰ we are confronted with the communality of song and, judging from its apparent spontaneity,⁵¹ its commonness in this community. It therefore, belies the point to debate ‘whose song’ it is.⁵² It is the community’s song.

Finally, the prominence and impact of the reports of the Exodus event abroad suggest an orality that includes ideological interpretations of the event by the messengers. It is not far-fetched to envision reports that extol the exploits of Yahweh the warrior on behalf of his people, likely with some exaggerations. Hence, those in the line of march of these people know that they have to contend with Yahweh’s might.⁵³ If so, our suggestion that in the epistemology of this cultural context *event generates ideology* applies to both the children of Israel and the surrounding peoples. Their dread of Yahweh and the march of Israel stems from their interpretations of tales of the Exodus and, in particular, the Exodus event.⁵⁴

B. Epistemology in Psalm 77:1-21

Discussions of *Sitz im Leben* properly belong out with an inductive epistemological analysis of the material itself. However, suggestion of multiple *Sitze im Leben* has a bearing on epistemological constitution and appropriation.

Ambiguity in linking the material to a specific context suggests a tradition of collecting, using and preserving material that is not fixated with the concept of ‘author’ to the point of ascribing genuineness of material only where these are clearly traceable. Failure to limit the material to a single *Sitz im Leben* suggests a practice of appropriation that accepts multiple scenarios as legitimate *Sitze im Leben* for a tradition.⁵⁵ If so, this militates against the tendency by some scholars to attempt to establish the one *Sitz im Leben* that fits best and invalidates all others.

⁵⁰ Cf. p. 172.

⁵¹ Cf. the discussion concerning ‘then’ (תָּה, 15:1A) and how it indicates natural consequence on p. 162.

⁵² Cf. the positions reflected on p. 162, note 101 and p. 172, note 171.

⁵³ Cf. Josh 2:10-11.

⁵⁴ Exod 15:19.

⁵⁵ Cf. the discussion on pp. 173-176.

Considerations of ‘Asaph’ and ‘Jeduthun’⁵⁶ suggest that key ancestors can be the basis for group identities beyond their life tenures.⁵⁷ This in turn suggests an epistemological constitution where an important ancestor can spawn several identities bearing different kinds of associations to him or her. The possibilities seem endless and it is up to an examination of the material, *with a prior view* that all the ‘psalms of Asaph’ and all psalms bearing the ascription ‘according to Jeduthun’ are related somewhat, to shed more light on the possible meanings of the ascriptions. To dismiss *stated commonality* based on one’s failure to see the material grounds for it is to miss the whole point suggested by the ascription.⁵⁸

The facts that this is a psalm (therefore sung) and its declarative tone⁵⁹ imply an audience whether real or conceptual.⁶⁰ The psalm’s genre as ‘lament’ suggests public expression of inner turmoil. Inner feelings and thoughts may be expressed publicly. The presumed first person singular subject throughout the psalm suggests an individual. Likewise, personal confessions, whether of physical distress⁶¹, mental anguish⁶² or reflection and meditation⁶³ assume an individual subject. However, the public nature of the psalm suggests that groups of like-minded people may participate in it.

These observations raise the question of the relationship between form and use. If we assume that both characteristics are true, then we must conclude that the individual features of this psalm do not define its use. The ‘individual subject’ is a device for exploring the depths of the issues affecting the individual member of the society, while the public nature of the psalm either suggests that others *should* empathise with the singer or that they *already* share these experiences. Thus, both individuals and groups can use the psalm. Therefore, we should regard the psalm as ‘an

⁵⁶ 77:1.

⁵⁷ Cf. references to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob above.

⁵⁸ Cf. the discussion on pp. 173-175.

⁵⁹ This is evidenced by the vocative nature of the entire psalm. Note, for example, the device for emphasis in 2A₁ and 2A₂ and the commentary following. The translation could easily append an exclamation mark to each poetic unit in the psalm.

⁶⁰ Cf. Westermann’s classification of lament as an event that presupposes other people besides the addressee and the speaker discussed on p. 175.

⁶¹ E.g. 3B, 5A.

⁶² E.g. 3C, 4A₁, A₂, 5B.

⁶³ E.g. 4A₁, A₂, 6A₁-10B.

individualised public lament' where the singular subject represents both the individual and 'groups of like-minded people'.

The singer starts his (or her) lament by encapsulating the gist of the psalm in one graphic expression: my voice to God.⁶⁴ This is a very revealing instance of the premium placed on pithiness and imagery in poetic expression. 'My voice to God' expresses the 'speech event'. It also captures the fact that this is public, assuming an audience (hence 'voice') and the fact that this is intensely personal, hence 'my'.⁶⁵ 'Voice' is an empirical phenomenon yet it represents all the facets associated with this lament: physical disquiet, audible expression and reflection. In epistemological terms, this means that empirical phenomena can holistically express such diverse realities as physiological disquiet, emotions and abstract reflection. It also indicates the *epistemological priority of phenomena* by demonstrating that reference to empirical phenomena can evidence and express the abstract, the mental.

This pithy empirical expression is filled out by detail ('I will cry out' and 'he will incline his ear to me') to indicate both the singer's and divine action in the 'dialogue'. There is obvious stylistic intent here in that the first 'filling out' expresses the psalmist's part while the second indicates God's part in what Watson, following Miller, calls 'synonymous-sequential parallelism'.⁶⁶ There is room for aesthetic construction in lament, in 'the day of distress' (3A).

Perhaps the imagery and poetry in 3B illustrate this observation best. A hand 'poured out' is a sublime expression meshing physical manifestation with mental state in one expression. It is the 'soul' (as explicitly indicated in 3C) that is 'poured out' (נָקַה).⁶⁷ However, the metaphor blends with the physiological, refusing to be comforted, because 3B clearly indicates the physical action, possibly arms raised in supplication

⁶⁴ 2A₁, A₂.

⁶⁵ However, it is conceivable that audible expression can feature in private 'dialogue' between the psalmist and God.

⁶⁶ "I will cry out" and "he will incline his ear to me" together express the idea of 'prayer' or 'entreaty'. Watson, 157.

⁶⁷ Elsewhere in the MT נָקַה occurs only in Lam 3:49, a clear reference to teary eyes and symptomatic for mental anguish. However verbal forms of נָקַה ('pour out') occur in the MT with reference to liquids (2 Sam 14:14 and Mic 1:4 – water; Ps 75:9 – wine) and non-liquids in metaphorical expressions (Job 20:28 – goods; Ps 63:11 – sword; Jer 18:21 and Ezek 35:5 – people; and Mic 1:6 – stones).

and entreaty.⁶⁸ Linking this to ‘pour out’ conceivably intimates the mental condition (3C) necessitating this posture.

This fluid movement between the physical and the mental, perhaps indicative of a holistic understanding of mental processes and physical expression, permeates the entire psalm. 4A₁-A₂ refers to mental condition. ‘My spirit faints away’ (4A₂) intimates the physical condition that this produces. ‘You have grasped the eyelids of my eyes’ (5A) tantalisingly suggests that God is the cause of mental disquiet, literally, of robbing the psalmist of sleep, and is another concrete way of indicating mental anguish, using the phenomenological language of physiological effect to communicate rational and emotional realities.⁶⁹

In suggesting the above, the phrase betrays a perception that God is intimately involved in the psalmist’s experiences and their interpretations. Perplexing circumstances and ‘anomalous’ scenarios are ultimately related to God for clarification and resolution. It is precisely this premise of divine ontological and epistemological involvement that problematizes apparent ‘absence’ of divine favour.⁷⁰

By contrast, earlier times were replete with manifestations of God’s activity, ‘the right hand of the Most High’ (יְמִין עֲלִיּוֹן, 11B).⁷¹ The psalmist’s worldview is clearly theistic with no polarisation between God and life-experience. God is expected to be a part of life and its rationalisation and his ‘absence’, evidenced in life-situations, is an aberration.

Both ‘spirit’ (7B₂) and ‘heart’ (7B₁) are instruments of recall and reflection. They both have reflective functions. This could be because MT usage of ‘heart’ (לֵב) predominantly relates to the ‘inner person’ hence as a synonym of ‘spirit’ (רוּחַ).⁷² In

⁶⁸ Cf. the commentary on pp. 177-178.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ This absence is variously represented in the psalm as ‘rejection’ (8A, B), ‘cessation of רַחֲמִים (9A) and promise (9B) and ‘curtailing of graciousness and compassion in anger’ (10A, B). Cf. Brueggemann’s claim that lament is evidence of “genuine covenant interaction” and necessary for responsible faith. Brueggemann, “Costly Loss of Lament,” 60-62.

⁷¹ This is variously portrayed in the psalm as the ‘deeds of Yah’ (12A), ‘wonders’ (12B, 15A), ‘work’ or ‘deeds’ (13A₁, A₂), his ‘way’ (14A) and ‘strength’ (16A).

⁷² BDB, 523-525. Cf. Ps 119:2; Exod 7:22 – ‘volition’; Ps 147:3; Isa 46:12; Gen 8:12 – ‘emotions’; and Prov 6:18; Isa 6:10 – ‘reflection’. For rare use of לֵב to indicate the physiological organ, see Exod 28:30.

this matter, the language evidences use that makes the metaphorical use of a word the predominant one.⁷³ The 'concrete' 'heart' (לב) is the preferred semantic unit for indicating metaphysical realities, illustrating a penchant for 'concreteness' in linguistic expression.

Rhetorical questions (8-10) serve both as entreaty⁷⁴ (or lament) and as a way of presenting the basis for the entreaty almost as a reminder to God. It is because God does not reject forever (8A, B), has unceasing 'loving kindness' (9A) and gives an enduring 'promise' or 'word' (9B), does not forget to be gracious and is compassionate in anger (10A, B) that the psalmist is entreating him for a revival of divine activity. Further, the use of the third person in these rhetorical questions ensures some distance⁷⁵ when clearly the addressee is God.⁷⁶ This may reflect a reticence to accuse God directly,⁷⁷ 'to his face', an inconceivable notion in a strictly hierarchical society given that God is the ultimate Supreme Being in a worldview we have judged to be theistic and holistic.

In the light of our theory regarding directness and hierarchy,⁷⁸ the subject matter here, complaint within faith, mitigates against direct address. It is as though the psalmist, seeking to ask God concerning perplexing and disconcerting issues⁷⁹ and to suggest some course of action, but lacking an intermediary (the prophet or priest), opts for indirect address.⁸⁰

In keeping with our assessment, indirect address gives way to direct address in 13-21 where the material takes on a doxological note. The tone of the recital of the 'deeds'

⁷³ Interestingly, the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* ascribes such use of 'heart' to lack of specific knowledge concerning the physiological heart in the ancient world. Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman, eds., 368.

⁷⁴ Cf. the discussion on pp. 179-180.

⁷⁵ I.e. God is not addressed directly.

⁷⁶ Cf. the scenario elsewhere where rhetorical questions directed at Yahweh are cast in direct address but where the substance of the address was doxological, pp. 216-217.

⁷⁷ We use 'accuse' because this is the superficial import of the form, questions about God, even if we have concluded that they are rhetorical.

⁷⁸ Cf. p. 120.

⁷⁹ Literally, this is the psalmist's 'sickness' (11A).

⁸⁰ For a possible parallel in the MT, see the way the Shunammite woman addresses the prophet Elisha in 2 Kgs 4:28, 37, or the way the Prophet Nathan's addresses King David. 2 Sam 12. Cf. Deut 34:10 and Exod 20:19. Cf. Hendel: 618-619.

(14A-21)⁸¹ is exclamatory and the language rises to mythical levels. It is language remarkably similar at some points to that in the Song at the Sea⁸² and, in keeping with that language, a linguistic allusion to Canaanite myths.

Invoking mythical language appears to be the language of sublime doxological expression. Hence, the psalmist, as the protagonists of the Song at the Sea, viewed the allusions as functional tools for expressing the highest praise.⁸³ The allusions reshape those myths in ways that make them tools for high praise for their God. With them, comes anthropomorphic imagery that translates, at least in linguistic terms, every natural phenomenon into acting subjects and reacting objects.⁸⁴ For example, lightning is God's arrow.⁸⁵ When the note of sublime doxological expression abates, the language reverts to near-narrative prose.⁸⁶ In the light of the above, it is erroneous to read substantive mythical meanings into the language of sublime doxological expression.

Since we understand 'remember' (זכר, 12A, B) as part of a larger parallelism that incorporates the ideas of 'meditation' and 'musing' (13A₁, A₂),⁸⁷ then זכר incorporates more ideas than 'recall'. It is a 'whole' that encompasses multiple nuances of meaning. We have here, then, an illustration of the epistemological tendency in this language towards semantic 'wholes' that encompass multiple meanings which assume specificity in usage. Even if this were an attribute of the poetic form of the material, the epistemological dynamics would not be negated thereby.

In naming Jacob and Joseph as 'fathers' of Israel (16B), the psalmist betrays trans-generational continuity and that key people become rallying points and the basis for

⁸¹ Appropriately, and as at the height of the doxological part of the Song at the Sea (Exod 15:11), a rhetorical question (מִי־אֵל גָּדוֹל כְּאֱלֹהִים: 14B) indicating the incomparability of God stands at the head of the doxology.

⁸² Cf. p. 182.

⁸³ Cf. Cassuto, *Exodus*, 178-180; the discussion on pp. 160-161.

⁸⁴ Cf. 17A, B and C.

⁸⁵ 18C.

⁸⁶ 21A, B.

⁸⁷ Cf. the discussion on pp. 181-182.

group identities.⁸⁸ Thus, they are ‘sons’ or ‘children’ in both the senses of ‘descendants of’ (Jacob) and ‘those identified with’ (Joseph).⁸⁹ This illustrates some possibilities in specific meaning for ‘son’ (בֶּן). As with זֶכֶר above, such usage suggests an entrenched trend for semantic units to hold meaning at the general, comprehensive level and to attain specificity in use.

Finally, in reflecting very closely the Song at the Sea, the psalm suggests that historical representation may ‘borrow’ (or evoke) the Exodus narrative indirectly i.e. through another appropriation.⁹⁰ When memory is viewed as a continuum, this would pose no problem at all. The suggestion is that the ‘fuller’ memory of a tradition does not lie in a specific representation but synoptically, in all the representations collectively.

C. Epistemology in Joshua 24:1-28

Auld perceived the reality of two substantially different received traditions of Joshua 24⁹¹ as bringing attention to the tension between historicity and reception⁹² and trustworthiness. However, plurality of reception traditions only impinges on the trustworthiness of particular receptions among those still oriented towards the possibility and value of deconstructing received traditions and attempting to reconstruct the historical realities behind them⁹³ and those who see a direct correlation between the historical priority of material and its veracity. Affirming that “the written texts depend in various ways on earlier discourses, both oral and written”⁹⁴ is quite a different matter from attempting to isolate those discourses from

⁸⁸ Jacob is a key figure in the Exodus narrative as the ‘father’ of Israel, Exod 1:1, 5. Joseph is a key figure in the Exodus narrative as the forerunner of the children of Israel in Egypt and their benefactor. Exod 1:5-6.

⁸⁹ In biological terms, Joseph was a ‘son’ of Jacob (Gen 30:22-24) while the generation of the descendants of Israel in focus in the Exodus is quite removed from these two (Exod 1:6).

⁹⁰ Cf. p. 182.

⁹¹ See the discussion on p. 185, esp. notes 241 and 243.

⁹² Cf. p. 185, note 243.

⁹³ For examples of such scholarship, see the discussion on pp. 185-188.

⁹⁴ Hendel: 603.

received traditions. It is also a different matter from apportioning fidelity to receptions given that every ‘remembering’ is purpose-driven. Rather, it is more helpful to regard all representations as part of one ‘mnemohistory’.

We note that reception of tradition appears to have been an integral and ongoing practice for ‘didactic remembering’ in Israel.⁹⁵ In the epistemological analysis below, we will explore how this particular reception, Joshua 24, sheds light on the worldview and epistemological constitution in the material.

Joshua addresses the nation of Israel through her leaders: the elders, heads, judges and authorities (1a, b). This demonstrates the hierarchical stratification of this society. It also implies that authority in this community lies with the leaders. They answer on behalf of the people without consulting them.⁹⁶

In the ensuing discourse, Joshua as Yahweh’s representative stands isotopic-ally for Yahweh to the extent of using *wa’eqtals* for a communiqué presumed to be originating with Yahweh. This so-called prophetic stance underscores the level to which a bearer of messages from the deity to the people identifies with the deity.⁹⁷

However, we need not understand the stance as evidencing a revelation event ensuing in inspired utterance. This is ultimately Yahweh’s representation of history; therefore, the language must reflect this. Nevertheless, the argument is Joshua’s albeit as ‘prophet’ rehearsing history in terms that trace Yahweh’s guidance and acts in Israel’s transformation from a clan to a nation.⁹⁸ However, Joshua’s instrumentality does not remove anything from the fact that Yahweh is the one ‘speaking’ because Joshua is here standing as Yahweh’s representative. This suggests ‘thus says the Lord’ is broad enough to include speech within revelation events and ‘inspired’ interpretations or perceptions. If so, it shows that the judgements and pronouncements of servants of the deity are ascribed to the deity

⁹⁵ Cf. Exod 10:2; 13:8; Deut 32:7; Josh 4:7; and Matt 26:13. This approximates what Assmann calls ‘mnemohistory’, “the past as it is remembered” or “reception theory applied to history”. Assmann, 8-9.

⁹⁶ E.g. ‘we will serve the Lord’, 18b, 21b and 24b.

⁹⁷ Cf. 1 Cor 4:1-2.

⁹⁸ This is also evidenced by the fact that Joshua is able to shift between an isotopic (the *wa’eqtols*) and a leader’s stance (7a-c) within the speech. Yahweh’s actions in this transformation are clearly indicated by the *wa’eqtols*. Cf. Bar-Efrat, 64-65.

beyond immediate moments of revelation. In our case, they include recapitulation of salvation history.

In this recapitulation, the ‘fathers’ cited are Terah and Nahor, apparently named because they served ‘other gods’.⁹⁹ The reference is intended to say to Israel, “Your origins are as worshippers of other gods”. This extraordinary affirmation of continuity between generations makes recall of the experiences of past generations ‘didactic remembering’ in the sense that the memory instructs the one remembering through affirming common identity and rehearsing ‘shared’ experiences.

There is temporal but not conceptual distance between the ancestors and later generations. This militates against the need to delineate and apply lessons from representations of history. The rehearsing simultaneously opens up opportunities to learn from precedence with the benefit of hindsight. The above represents the power of *implicit argument* mediated through empathetic recall.

In various ways, the narrative assumes continuity with the fathers. When Joshua declares his position (15e), he aligns himself with the faith of the fathers.¹⁰⁰ It is also an implicit invitation or challenge from Joshua to the leaders of the people to declare their positions on the matter. In addition, he applies pressure on them by virtue of the fact that he is the servant of Yahweh and functionally prior to them.¹⁰¹ As such, his declaration bears elements of command to those lower down in the hierarchy and is prescriptive.¹⁰²

Put together, the two elements vis-à-vis continuity with the fathers and hierarchical authority, represent formidable coercive power.¹⁰³ This best explains the defensive nature of the response (16-18) evident in the sense of indignation and in the rather lengthy agreement with Joshua.¹⁰⁴ Like Joshua, the leaders also align themselves

⁹⁹ 2c, d.

¹⁰⁰ The fathers embraced Yahweh after abandoning the gods they served in the region across the River (15c).

¹⁰¹ For illustrations in the MT of veneration for Yahweh’s servants, see 2 Kgs 4:16 (the Shunnamite woman addressing Elisha), Jud 6:13, 15 (Gideon to the angel of the Lord), 1 Sam 1:15 (Hannah to the priest), 2 Kgs 2:12 (Elisha about Elijah) and 2 Kgs 13:14 (King Joash about Elisha).

¹⁰² Cf. the imperatives discussed on pp. 194-195.

¹⁰³ Cf. p. 195.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. the commentary on vv. 16-18, pages 195ff. Note that their lengthy agreement includes elements (‘house of bondage’, 17b, ‘preserved’, 17d, etc.) not specifically part of the case made by Joshua.

with the fathers by including themselves in the Exodus narrative.¹⁰⁵ All this illustrates the centrality of the motif of community continuity and the didactic power it brings to recall and recital. In this epistemological constitution, 'mnemohistory' is intrinsically didactic.¹⁰⁶

The narrator does not use a *wa'eqtal* with Jacob and his children's descent to Egypt (4c) *marking a break in the pattern* and thereby indicating anticipated development in the narrative.¹⁰⁷ This illustrates how the narrator invites the leaders into the narrative to participate in the development and resolution of the plot.¹⁰⁸ Within the presumption of continuity, such participation becomes a personal journey in interpretation.

Seeking a curse in the context of war (9d) betrays a worldview that understands the outcome of human activity to be subject to decisions made in the spiritual realm.¹⁰⁹ Therefore, a direct appeal to spiritual involvement represents greater deterministic potency in conflict. This resonates with a worldview that does not deem human activity as divorced from spiritual activity. It is also the reason activities in the human realm would invite spiritual rationalisations. In this vein, all Israel's victories in conflicts were either because Yahweh 'gave' (נתן) their enemies into their hand¹¹⁰ or fought for them.¹¹¹ Similarly, Yahweh decreed all their migrations (3a-b, 5a, 6a and 8a) and acquisitions (3c-4b, 8c-d and 13a, c-d).

¹⁰⁵ 17a-e.

¹⁰⁶ Assmann admits that this is more than mere 'receiving' and 'transmitting' of history. However, he creates the unfortunate impression that mnemohistory undermines history (in spite of maintaining that it is not the opposite of history) when he suggests that it 'invents', 'reinvents' and 'reconstructs' the past with the present. Assmann, 9. It is more accurate to recognize that the narrator overtly or covertly shapes the material in spite of the façade of realism in which narrative is cast. Bar-Efrat, 23-45.

¹⁰⁷ Another indirect indicator of the message of the narrative is how the narrator glosses over several narratives in Genesis that are irrelevant to his aims. Cf. the commentary on p. 192 with respect to the commentary on 7f.

¹⁰⁸ In Bar-Efrat's estimation, indirect clues in narrative are overwhelmingly the way in which the genre invites the reader to see the viewpoint of the narrator. Bar-Efrat, 16, 45.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. the commentary on p. 193.

¹¹⁰ Cf. 8c and 11c.

¹¹¹ Cf. 5b, 7b-e, 8e, 10c and 12a-b. 12a-b is particularly insightful in this regard because Yahweh's action is distinguished from Israel's sword and bow.

Extensive description of Israel's inheritance in Canaan (13a-d)¹¹² as a way of indicating its richness is one of the many indirect ways that narrative communicates by inviting the participation of the reader (or hearer). Here, the reader ought to interpret *extensive description* as indicating the extravagance of this inheritance in relation to others before it. This suggests an epistemological constitution that expresses quality or measure by the 'extent of description'. Gathering the evidence, so to speak, is an integral part of reading or hearing.

In Joshua's challenge to the people, we understood 'fear', 'serve' and 'turn aside from' (14a, b and c) as specifics within 'choose' (15b).¹¹³ This makes 'choose' a comprehensive term like 'remember' (יָדַר) and 'son' (בֵּן) above¹¹⁴ and serves to underscore the observation made there. In addition, it suggests that 'fear', an abstract notion, is related to conduct. Thus, conduct that honours 'other gods' evidences 'fearing' those gods as opposed to Yahweh.

Joshua's rejoinder (19a-20a) evidences mastery of the art of indirect persuasion. In order to secure Israel's covenant commitment to Yahweh, he does not affirm their defensive rhetoric that has the façade of covenant faithfulness. Rather, in an apparent contradiction to his challenge (14a-e), he dismisses their pledge to serve Yahweh by pointing out inherent differences between Yahweh and Israel.¹¹⁵ However, this 'dismissal' is a *profound invitation* to Israel to prove him wrong. It is masterful use of *irony* in persuasion.

This reading is consistent with our earlier observation that in this epistemological constitution, communication tends to invite the participation of the interlocutor. Thus, Joshua is able to disguise his rebuke for Israel in *euphemistic language* that frames the language of rebuke as grounds for the impossibility of a covenant relationship between Yahweh and the people. At the same time, the grounds for this impossibility are detailed and specific terms on which covenant is possible, hence *invitation*. For this reason, we ought to understand Israel's second cycle of answering

¹¹² Cf. the commentary on p. 194.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Cf. pp. 223-224.

¹¹⁵ 'Able' (יָכֹל, 19b) has a strong stative element suggesting innate capacities. BDB, 407-408. 'Not able' in this case signifies qualitative distinctions between Yahweh and Israel (Yahweh is holy and jealous, 19c, d while Israel is inherently unfaithful, 20a-c) that negate the possibility of an enduring covenant relationship between the two.

(21a-b) as acceptance of the grounds or terms of covenant that Joshua lay out. The absence of an explanation for their insistence suggests tacit admission of guilt in keeping with Joshua's rebuke. It also suggests that they choose serving Yahweh in spite of their previous failures. All this is consistent with our suggestion that Joshua is inviting Israel to a new start, a new choice and a new basis for covenant renewal.¹¹⁶

In the above discussion, presupposition of an epistemological framework that operates by 'preserving the dignity of the public face of the other' and therefore is predisposed towards indirect communication, and by inviting the interlocutor in the discernment of meaning, has led us to trace the critical threads of persuasion and choice in the dialogue. The two having run their courses successfully, what remains is establishing testimonies and 'cutting' the covenant. Focus on their own witness to their choice (22a-e) concludes the matter of persuasion.

Erecting a stone as a complementary witness to confession provides an interesting insight. Inanimate objects that are associated with matters related to human volition serve as reminders and re-enforcements of that volition. It represents an extraordinary inclusion of the material order of the universe into metaphysical realities. The thing to observe, however, is that the meaning and significance of the stone rests in the way the participants in this activity perceive it. It has no significance, other than as a stone, outside this perception. At its most basic level, the stone is a mnemonic device. Yet, in its function in the minds of the participants, it is a 'living' witness. This phenomenon demonstrates how representations or symbols are *always* social 'constructs'.

D. Epistemology in the Prayer of Habakkuk

As was the case with Ps 77, the *Sitz im Leben* of this prayer raises two issues that have an impact on the discussion of epistemology. First is the issue of the lack of clear biographic material for the prophet. Second is the matter of poetics vis-à-vis continuity between the first two chapters and the third.

¹¹⁶ Cf. pp. 197-198.

The clear paucity of biographic material, extending to the significance of the name in relation to the message and ministry of the prophet,¹¹⁷ has the effect of accentuating the message at the expense of the messenger. This is not a defect unless there is an expectation that authorial biographic material will be part of the material.

In addition, differences in genre between the first two chapters and the third can only be problematic where there is prior expectation that material cannot belong together unless it belongs to the same genre. Indeed, without such an expectation, the presence of this prayer following the first two chapters suggests that genre differences do not indicate substantive discontinuity. For the same reason, prophetic ministry need not be at variance with music.¹¹⁸

V.2 stands at the head of the prayer as a concise summary of what follows. Thus, vv.3-15 is an explication of 'report' (2A). 16 A₁-B₂ is an expansion of 'I was afraid' (2A). What remains are the two parts of the prayer: the prayer proper (2B₁-B₃), the declaration of faith (16C-18B₂) and doxology (19). The prayer is thus, structured in such a way that the parts are sung twice with the second being the fuller or exposition of the first. Repetition is stylistic according to the genre 'poetry' and the form 'music'.

The explication of 'report' takes the form of re-enactment in song. The historical events evoked are not reducible to any one specific tradition, hence the difficulty of trying to identify the traditions referred to in the psalm.¹¹⁹ Seemingly, several 'deeds' of Yahweh, the substance of his 'report' or 'fame', have coalesced into one 'report' or 'deed'. The prophet is not interested in the particulars of the 'report' although it is conceivable to suggest specific traditions for some references.¹²⁰ He is rather evoking them at a more holistic level, the level of characterisation where Yahweh's fame has become an integral part of his identity. He is the God who comes gloriously to the aid of his people.

If our analysis is correct, this 'psalm' illustrates how traditions can be appropriated at different levels depending on the nature and aim of the appropriation. Here, the

¹¹⁷ Cf. pp. 199-200. Strictly speaking, we should consider names that have a bearing on the ministry and message of a prophet as insights into the messages as opposed to biographic material.

¹¹⁸ Cf. the discussion on the musical clues in the prayer on p. 202.

¹¹⁹ Cf. the commentary on p. 203.

¹²⁰ For a discussion of the possible traditions alluded to, see the discussion on pp. 206-208.

prophet intends to invoke the characterization from the holistic 'report' in prayer and as a basis for supplication. Several traditions are apparently combined to form a synoptic tradition vis-à-vis a 'report' or more appropriately, 'fame'. At the level of 'fame' the particular traditions are somewhat obscured and their historical references relegated to the background.

The language of re-enactment is reminiscent of other re-enactments. It echoes Canaanite mythology and even Greek and oriental thought. Day's analysis, in particular, presents compelling points of comparison between the mythical language in this prayer and specific Canaanite myths and traditions.¹²¹ As in other re-enactments, there is no indication in the text that echoing common myths entailed adopting the beliefs associated with those myths.¹²² This suggests that the form of language used does not entirely determine the meanings in expressions. In essence, the user has the licence to manipulate existing meanings and language in new ways.

The language also employs figurative elements to a significant extent. Cush and Midian (7A, B) are partitive for all the nations in Israel's path of advance.¹²³ Mountains and hills 'scatter' and 'bow down' (6B₁, B₂). This is in addition to the imagery in language evoking Canaanite myths in the striking parallels between 3:3-15 and Ps 77. There the mountains 'writhe' (10A). *T^ehom* lifts his voice (10C). Sun and moon stand in their heights while lightning, the arrows and spear of Yahweh, flash and glitter illuminating the world in their stead (11).¹²⁴

At the centre of this majestic imagery is an awesome and rampaging Yahweh. Rhetorical questions establish his mission (8A-D) and are another excellent example of inviting the interlocutor into the interpretation of material. Since Yahweh was not angry at the streams or rivers or the sea, what or who was it he was angry with? Following the psalmist through the re-enactment will lead to the answer: those who oppressed his people, the house of the wicked (13B₁).

Thus, to borrow from Day, a historicization of *Chaoskampf* has led the psalmist to depict Israel's oppressors in the language of mythical *Yam*. Since the addressee is

¹²¹ Cf. pp. 204 and 207.

¹²² For a discussion of possible polemical elements against those beliefs in this borrowing, see pp. 204-208.

¹²³ Cf. p. 205.

¹²⁴ Cf. p. 206.

Yahweh, we may conclude that historicization is a feature of *communication* to Yahweh as well as an invitation to human audiences to ‘interpret’ the associations made. Thus, transfer of information is fundamentally interactive regardless of the type¹²⁵ of transfer in question. This is the genius of communication in both narrative prose and poetic narrative.¹²⁶

‘Your people’ (13A₁) is paralleled by ‘Your anointed one’ (13A₂), likely evoking Israel’s covenantal standing with Yahweh.¹²⁷ This illustrates how the inclusion of concise material, in this case a single word, evokes entire narratives vis-à-vis Israel’s covenant relationship with Yahweh. The same principle was responsible for the inclusion of entire Canaanite myths by the mere inclusion of such words as *הוהוה* for *הוהוה*, *הוהוה* or their cognates.¹²⁸

This represents a style of ‘citation’ that is predicated on supplying ‘inviting’ links to other materials (hence ‘evoking’) as opposed to making explicit substantive references. The communicator assumes that the addressee thoroughly knows the substantive material alluded to and only needs to be pointed in a particular direction in order to make the intended conceptual connections. This mode of ‘citation’ poses a challenge to ‘readers’ or ‘hearers’ who are not privy to the substantive material alluded to. However, it poses no problem whatsoever to ‘epistemological insiders’.

Mental turmoil and reflection are evidenced by physiological states (16A₁-B₂) suggesting a direct correlation between the mental (metaphysical) and physiological (physical). Thus, physical states are windows into mental states.

The antithetic background of the confession of faith (17A₁-A₆) implies direct correlation between developments associated with climactic changes (A₁-A₃), the rewards of human labour (A₄) and the productivity of livestock (A₅-A₆) and Yahweh’s favour. Thus, lack of prosperity from fields and livestock is ‘evidence’ of Yahweh’s withdrawal and, presumably, their prosperity evidences Yahweh’s

¹²⁵ By ‘type’, we mean all the forms of information transfer within the frameworks of monologues and dialogues. Examples of different types would include ‘teaching’, ‘praise’ and, in this case, ‘prayer’.

¹²⁶ Cf. Bar-Efrat, 9. To illustrate the predominance of ‘invitation’ in the Bible, see Gen 38:11-26 (Tamar ‘inviting’ Judah to interpret his own dishonesty), 2 Sam 12:1-13 (Nathan ‘inviting’ David into his own condemnation), Ezek 4:1-3 (Israel ‘invited’ to interpret a prophecy) and John 2:12-17 (the disciples ‘invited’ by Christ’s action to interpret Ps 69:9).

¹²⁷ Cf. the discussion on p. 208 and note 376.

¹²⁸ 10 B, C. Cf. Exod 15:8A, B₂ and Ps 77:17A, C. Another example of this mode of citation is how *הוהוה* (Exod 15:2A₁) or part of it conjures up the entire Song at the sea. E.g. Ps 118:14.

covenantal commitment. The dialogue in the first two chapters subverts this position in that Yahweh has revealed that his commitment continues in spite of deteriorating circumstances.¹²⁹

The following is a summary of the epistemology and worldview in the analyses above.

A theistic and holistic worldview is foundational to the material. God is sovereign over nature and people. Therefore, the winds, sea and floods do Yahweh's bidding and are manifestations of his 'right hand'. He even influences pharaoh's heart. Habakkuk also relates the fortunes of rain, crops and animals to Yahweh's favour. This perception extends to others in the region, who equally acknowledge Yahweh's 'signs' and fear Israel's advance as a result. In addition, curse, as also Yahweh's acts of 'giving', determine the course of human affairs.

To Israel, God is immanent and accessible. His servants converse with him directly (Moses, Habakkuk), speak (Joshua) and act (Moses) on his behalf. This reveals a dynamic association between God and his servants. The people are conscious of God's immanence and address him directly in praise (Song at the Sea, parts of Ps 77 and parts of the Prayer of Habakkuk) and lament.

An elaborate hierarchy that governs communication is evident in the data. God communicates directly with his representatives and only indirectly with the rest. The people only address God directly when their language is complimentary or supplicatory. In both cases, such communication is couched in poetic expression and employs mythical language.

Joshua, the servant of God, communicates with the congregation of Israel through her leaders. These leaders have authority to represent the people. The twin bonds of ethnicity and covenant bind Israel together. Both are held in continuous fashion with the 'fathers'. Key ancestors also spawn multiple identities.

The traditions of Israel and surrounding nations are tools in the matrix in which communication occurs. The users control the use of such traditions and therefore, the meanings that we must understand in specific uses. In the use of traditions, function takes precedence over historical particularity making the debate concerning the

¹²⁹ By 'deteriorating circumstances' we refer to the ungodliness that occasioned the prophet's complaint. The scenarios in the 'protasis' are probably hypothetical but revealing nonetheless.

constraining effects of *Sitz im Leben* on meaning often quite irrelevant. The existence of different traditions of Joshua and the fact that Ps 77 evokes the Exodus tradition as found in the Song at the Sea indicates that traditions were viewed as a cumulative testimony as opposed to ‘copyrighted’ versions requiring careful reproduction.

The notion of ‘reports’ abroad suggests an oral culture. The practice of referencing through evoking other traditions also suggests this. Collective expression of thoughts and feelings in lament and song suggest a level of common identity for the community. Spontaneity of dance suggests that this is a common feature of their celebrations.

There is extended latitude in conceptualization that includes the adoption of the genre poetry, figurative language, including simile, metaphor and personification, the use of the language of *Chaoskampf*, the dramatization of the narrative material and stylistic construction. It includes generic meanings that find particularity in specific use, emphasis by repetition of words and fluid movement (or even fusion) between physical state or action and thought or emotion. Finally, it includes a presumption that communication is indirect, occurring at a subterranean level.

Indirect communication devices include the subtle ways in which narratives construct arguments and chart areas of focus. They also include rhetorical questions and the practice of evoking. Indirect communication devices always demand the participation of the interlocutor in the resolution of meanings. In addition, experience features prominently in communication. For instance, ‘signs’ are a basis for theological knowledge.¹³⁰ Communication is also concrete in the sense of brevity that embodies extended narratives.

¹³⁰ Cf. 1 Cor 1:22 – “For indeed Jews seek for signs, and Greeks for wisdom.” NASB.

Part III: Towards an African Biblical Hermeneutical Method

Chapter 8: Continuities between the Epistemology Evidenced in the Zambian Research Data and in the Biblical Data and their Ramifications for African Biblical Hermeneutical Methods

Chapter 7 was an extrapolation of the epistemology evident in select intra-biblical appropriations and re-appropriations of the Exodus event in the preceding chapter. It completes the task of establishing correlations between data and epistemology started in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 8, we confirm, on the limited scale presented by the two sets of data, the summary in Chapter 2 that African and OT epistemological constructs bear striking affinities. We do so by a direct comparison of the epistemologies from the two sets of data contained in Chapters 5 and 7. Based on the continuities we find, we isolate epistemological features that constitute a base upon which Africans can articulate biblical hermeneutical methods that are also based on their epistemological constitution.

The chapter is divided into two sections. In the first, we compare the two sets of data with a view to identify continuities and establish the thesis noted above. This process compares Chapters 5 and 7 in the light of Chapter 2. In the second, we isolate the epistemological features that are common to both sets of data and discuss their implications for African biblical hermeneutical methods.

A. Continuities between the Epistemology in the Zambian Research Data and in Select Intra-Biblical Appropriations and Re-Appropriations of the Exodus Event

In order to facilitate comparison, we take the epistemological categories from the Zambian research data and seek parallels in the epistemology extrapolated from the biblical data. We make this comparison in the light of the detailed analyses in Chapters 4 and 6 based on the epistemological extrapolations in Chapters 5 and 7.

1. Correlation of epistemological categories between the biblical data and Zambian research data

1.1. Coherence and Spirituality of Creation

1.1.a. Coherence

Our analysis of the Zambian research data exposed a category of community, hence coherence, predicated on common humanity as God's creation and shared spirituality among those who 'serve' God. We noted that the concrete phenomenon of *existence* was presumptive evidence for ideology. For this reason, we will be looking for references to *experience* and its relation to ideology in the biblical data. Overlap among the categories is inevitable. However, we still discuss them separately to highlight their contributions to the larger picture. We analyse evidence from individual texts before combining it into a composite picture.

1.1.a.a. The Song at the Sea

Yahweh's covenant relationship with their 'fathers' is the ideological context of the Song. Within this, the focus is on this generation's 'knowledge' of Yahweh. However, we still find allusions to community beyond Israel.

The language of mythical traditions common to surrounding cultures and societies suggests a cultural continuum at the levels of worldview and epistemology. However, we noted that such continuity does not entail common belief or even uniform use of the myths. It merely suggests common knowledge of traditions and their epistemological associations. This suggests a fraternity of societies that extends beyond Israel at socio-cultural and epistemological levels.

The possibility that 'Moses and the children of Israel' share a common perspective and feelings to the point of adopting singular verbs suggests at least conceptual unity among this group. This could also reflect a sense of common identity based on ethnicity and covenant as their association with the 'fathers' indicates. Moses' clearly evidences a sense of unity with the Hebrews that is based on ethnicity and is

stronger than the bond of adoption. Admittedly, ethnicity and covenant are also bases for discontinuity with Egypt and other societies.

The priority of *experience* in the Zambian data is matched by the priority of experience in the narratives of the 'fathers' in the formation of Israel's identity. We note, however, that the former's common humanity and shared faith experience are broader bases than the latter's tradition and ethnicity. Further, both spirituality and tradition relate to the same God with the former as an extension of the latter. Common ontology as God's creatures is a deduction arising from this continuity. God creating humanity is, after all, a teaching of the Torah.

Neither data, then, considers humanity apart from belief in God. Further, the continuity of the respondents with Israel at both the levels of humanity and spirituality arises from their participation in Israel's spiritual tradition in the biblical material. 'African', here is a broader understanding of Israel's spirituality to include all humanity.

1.1.a.b. Ps 77:1-21

Several features in this psalm reflect the limited levels of coherence in the Song. The difficulty and inadvisability of limiting it to a specific *Sitz im Leben* suggests common experiences among the covenant people that relativize consideration of 'appropriate context'.

The flexibility of 'Asaph' and 'Jeduthun' suggests creation of identities beyond biographical-historical limits. Apparently, trans-generational Israel is able to participate in the identities of 'Asaph' and 'Jeduthun' in new but also continuous ways with biographical-historical ones.

The genre 'psalm' implies a public arena and hence society. 'Lament' as 'psalm' illustrates the substance of such public expression. The language of *Chaoskampf* suggests socio-cultural continuity beyond Israel. Finally, Jacob and Joseph are 'fathers' based on ethnic and covenant continuities.

Other than the limited suggestions of echoes of *Chaoskampf*, nothing in the psalm suggests 'coherence' in terms other than ethnicity and faith experience. The same relationship between the Zambian data and biblical material noted above applies here.

1.1.a.c. *Joshua 24:1-28*

This text contains the most extensive evidence of ‘coherence’ in terms of kinship and covenant. Joshua uses the congregation’s ancestry to establish her pagan origins. In this, he appeals to kinship as the most basic form of continuity for this audience. Covenant-based continuity is a development on this foundation.

Apparently, *confessing* Yahweh’s role in the narratives of the ‘fathers’ evidenced continuity with and fidelity to their covenant with Yahweh. Knowing these traditions indicated inclusion in them. Differences between MT and LXX versions of Joshua illustrate the versatility of mnemohistory and imply a history of transmission and appropriation.

Joshua’s isotopic stance sheds some insight on divine immanence in relation to representatives of God. ‘Speaking for God’ apparently includes human interpretation of history outside revelation events. His role as Yahweh’s servant licenses him to speak for God in the first person.

The role of a stone as witness to the covenant suggests an epistemology that includes inanimate objects in human discourse by human consensus. This indicates the priority of society in epistemological associations.

Common ontology based on ethnicity and covenant falls short of the broader categories in the *Zambian* data. Even the versatility of traditions, transmission and appropriation and a hermeneutic of epistemological participation assume Israel’s narrower community. As in the two texts above, the bases in the *Zambian* research data are largely developments from this narrower sense.

1.1.a.d. *The Prayer of Habakkuk*

Lack of biographic material in the prophecy of Habakkuk indicates the same flexibility of material that we associated with Psalm 77 in relation to *Sitz im Leben*. In this case, authorial concerns and possibility of redactor activity do not subtract from the theological witness in the material.

Occasional detail becomes even more remote when ‘report’ conflates several traditions to characterize Yahweh as the God who comes majestically to the aid of his people. It approximates a systematization of the significance of traditions.

In this 'report', we also discern knowledge and use of traditions held in common with other cultures as with the Song at the Sea and Psalm 77. We noted before that this only suggests a common worldview, not common beliefs. In the use of rhetorical questions, we also find the epistemological feature of inviting the interlocutor into the resolution of meanings.

Citation by evoking presupposes a body of knowledge held in common by speaker and audience. 'Your anointed one' (13A₂) is an example of a word evoking the covenant community and their traditions.

Lack of parallels in scope of community between the two sets of data is because the 'people of God' in the Zambian data are an extension of those in the biblical material. Therefore, the former see extended definitions of categories that the latter do not. However, a hermeneutic that operates by inviting the interlocutor in the resolution of meanings suggests a level of 'consciousness of the other' that finds its fullest expression in the holistic nature of community in the Zambian data. What the biblical data does not evidence in its scope, it intimates in its epistemology.

1.1.b. Spirituality

Spirit beings are prior to and interpenetrate all reality in the Zambian data. They are immanent and active in human activities. They include God and Satan and their dominions. The biblical data evidenced the spirituality of creation as follows.

1.1.b.a. *The Song at the Sea*

Echoes of *Chaoskampf* at the very least indicate a worldview that includes spirit beings in the drama of life. Subversions of myths that change the referents, their activities and the objects on which they act do not take away from the reality of this cosmology and epistemology. Yahweh as a warrior whose weapons include wind and sea presupposes a worldview where the natural world is subject to his decrees. Such acts commend him to Israel and Egypt and engender 'knowledge'. Neighbouring nations make the same associations and therefore exhibit a similar worldview. In the song, the people betray consciousness of God's presence by addressing him directly.

Immanent spirituality is the basis of the elaborate activities of the Holy Spirit in the Zambian research data. It is also the basis for the parallel and antagonistic activities of Satan, demons and seducing spirits. Both sets of data, then, reflect worldviews that understands spirit beings as part of human experience of life.

References to ‘fathers’ indicate a consciousness of their continued existence.¹ We only note a sense of continuity as the data does not elaborate further the nature of this continuity.²

1.1.b.b. Ps 77:1-21

The psalm betrays the same consciousness of ‘fathers’ that we encountered above here, in reference to Jacob and Joseph. We may infer the same consciousness in references to Asaph and Jeduthun although, here, the focus is on the identity or identities that these ancestors spawned.

The psalm contains the references to *Chaoskampf* noted in the Song to such a degree that many suspect a borrowing of material. Their significance noted there for considerations of worldview apply here.

The psalm is a speech event, dialogue between the psalmist and God. The dialogue betrays both consciousness of divine immanence and the intimacy that exists between God and his people. Yahweh inclines his ear to the cry of the psalmist and the psalmist bares his soul voicing his perplexity to Him with petition. Both aspects underscore the presumption of a spiritual cosmology.

¹ Cf. Matt 22:32; Mark 12:26; Luke 13:28 and 20:37. However, the New Testament concept of ‘resurrection’ is absent in practically all traditions of continuity of life after death, including Canaanite ones and, some argue, the Old Testament. N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God; V. 3 (London: SPCK, 2003), 62, 80. Cf. S. E. Porter, “Resurrection, the Greeks and the New Testament,” in *Resurrection*, ed. S. E. Porter, Michael A. Hayes, and David Tombs (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 74-77. Wright roots ‘resurrection’ in the Scriptures within the worldview of second-Temple Judaism and in the seed of the beliefs of the Patriarchs. Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 80, 86.

² Wright, for instance, argues that ‘sleeping with the ancestors’ in the Old Testament meant going to the world of the dead to be reunited with one’s forebears in an existence that was next to nothing and does not resemble the extensive participation of the dead in the ongoing life of the people evident in many cultures. Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 90-91. Cf. R. E. Cooley, “Gathered to His People: A Study of a Dothan Family Tomb,” in *The Living and Active Word of God*, ed. M. Inch and R. Youngblood (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 52; and P. S. Johnston, *Shades of Sheol: Death and the Afterlife in the Old Testament* (Leicester: Apollos, 2002), chapter 8.

This text presents us with a clear example of spirit activity *through* people. Joshua's isotopic stance transforms his speech and perspective into Yahweh's speech and perspective. Joshua and his audience also confess divine activity in the traditions of the 'fathers' as a mark of continuity with those traditions.

In addition, this text presents us with evidence of 'other gods'. The 'fathers' 'served' 'other gods' beyond the river and Israel is guilty of serving 'other gods' in Egypt and in Canaan. This betrays a tradition of serving gods that precedes knowledge of Yahweh. Appeal to spiritual authority is also evident when Balak summons Balaam to curse Israel.

God speaking *through* Joshua parallels the preacher's role as God's messenger in the Zambian research data. The centrality of God's activity in the traditions of Israel parallels the priority placed on spiritual activity in the Zambian data. 'Serving' other gods parallels life under the dominion of demons, seducing spirits and Satan in the Zambian data.

1.1.b.d. The Prayer of Habakkuk

This prayer is also a speech event and dialogue between God and the prophet. Its covenantal context is clear in that the prophet addresses God from the premise that God should both punish error among his people and distinguish between Israel and other nations. For this reason, the 'deeds' evoked in the 'report' are God's actions in the past on behalf of his people. In the prophet's perception, there is no polarity between God and circumstance. Failures in weather patterns, produce and livestock are linked to divine displeasure. The language *Chaoskampf* and other traditions suggest the socio-cultural continuities with neighbouring nations noted in the Song and Ps 77.

To summarize, then, relationships with spirit beings out with the knowledge of Yahweh are evident from two categories of evidence in the biblical data. The first are the socio-cultural continuities with other societies that shape the language of doxology in the three poetic texts. The second are the references to serving other gods in the region across the river, Egypt and Canaan. The third is the presumption of this dynamic in the act of cursing.

Parallels in the Zambian data include references to coming under the power of Satan, demons and seducing spirits in contradistinction to serving God. They also include the activities of witchdoctors.

Immanence in relation to Yahweh includes revelatory activities of the Holy Spirit in the Zambian material. Parallels in the biblical data include speech events (Song at the Sea, Ps 77 and Prayer of Habakkuk), Joshua's isotopic stance and in Moses' acting on behalf of Yahweh. It also includes references to God acting on behalf of his people. The Zambian data necessarily does not address this aspect extensively because of the limits of the research. However, supernatural 'acts' were mentioned as one way that God may validate his message.

God acting among his people is the basis for 'knowing' Yahweh in the biblical data. It is also the basis for praise, entreaty and covenant challenge. It included 'giving' opponents into the hands of Israel, routing them in behalf of Israel and 'giving' Israel an inheritance.

We have noted that the respondents in Zambia reflect the immanence that is in the Bible because of embracing the biblical traditions of Israel. However, their awareness and interaction with spirit beings out with Christian belief make such an embrace a natural progression. They find no worldview and epistemological conflict in the notion of spirit beings that are immanent and intimately involved in human thought and activity because this is already their cosmology. Therefore, the biblical God is planted in epistemologically familiar ground. We find the same worldview and epistemological continuity in the tension between idols and the one true God in the Corinthian church. There, Paul dismisses idols and affirms God within a spiritual cosmology, replacing one set of variables with another.³

³ 1 Cor 8. Esp. Vs 6 : ἀλλ' ἡμῖν εἷς θεὸς ὁ πατὴρ ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν, καὶ εἷς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς δι' αὐτοῦ.

1.2. Coherence and Hierarchy of Society

1.2.a. Coherence

Chapter 2 discusses ‘society’ in terms of local society, including family, extended family, the clan and the tribe, although it alludes to humankind. The local ‘society’ in the Zambian data is the congregation, a local manifestation of the ‘people of God’. As such, the data is concerned with defining relationships between preacher and congregation in the context of divine immanence.

The preacher and the congregation are the ‘people of God’ and pilgrims together under God. Within this framework, preachers are functionally prior in receiving revelation in the sermon event. However, validation of their ministry of the word is through ‘spiritual consensus’. The congregation, the community of those among whom the Spirit reveals, collectively stands to authenticate the revelation received and communicated by the preacher. Similarly, a ‘consensus’ of textual witnesses establishes a teaching, for texts are records of the testimony of inspired witnesses within the framework of God engaging people. The biblical data evidenced coherence of society as follows.

1.2.a.a. *The Song at the Sea*

Hints of a ‘society’ beyond Israel are suggested by the commonality of traditions of *Chaoskampf* between Israel and her neighbours that indicates a common worldview. The impact of ‘reports’ of the Exodus event abroad also suggests a common worldview. However, these hints are too vague for a clear understanding of the nature of this broader ‘society’.

One option for the ambiguity in relating plural subjects to singular verbs in the Song was common perception and feelings that lead to the use of singular verbs by plural subjects. This is a functional sense of ‘society’ in that it is more a reflection of consensus of thought and feeling at a particular moment than it is anything more. The community presupposed by the Song approximates this level of ‘society’ thereby abrogating the debate “whose song is it?” However, we know from elsewhere that this particular ‘society’ was also ‘society’ in ethnic and covenant terms.

The designation 'fathers' for ancestors several generations removed from the current one represents a sense of continuity, hence 'society' at the levels of ethnicity and covenant across generations. We see the potency of ethnicity in Moses' identification with the Hebrews over his adopted family. Ethnic and covenant based continuities apparently include the dead in 'society'.

The Zambian research data does not discuss ethnic-based 'society'. The closest it comes to this is a universal sense of humanity as creatures of God, a universal brotherhood of humankind. It discusses commonality and continuity based on faith extensively. Their congregations embrace the ancestors of Israel as 'fathers' on this basis and to the full extent that Israel does, including the perception that the dead 'fathers' are part of the 'society' of the 'people of God'.

1.2.a.b. Ps 77:1-21

The hints of 'society' beyond Israel that we associated with the language of *Chaoskampf* above reappear here. In addition, 'society' based on ethnicity and covenant-community-across-the-generations noted in references to 'fathers' above are present here in references to 'sons' in relation to Jacob and Joseph. The psalm has two additional hints of 'society'.

Ambiguity in limiting it to a specific 'author' and *Sitz im Leben* suggests ownership and use that transcend considerations of both. It suggests that the covenant community in all generations is the referent of the material and that its circumstances are equally legitimate *Sitze im Leben*.

Second, difficulties in limiting the designations 'Asaph' and 'Jeduthun' to specific individuals or groups of individuals in specific historical contexts indicates that key individuals in the history of a society can generate new identities. The public nature of 'psalm' and the intimacy of 'lament' support the suggestion that 'society' as covenant-community-across-the-generations is the owner and user of the material and that its circumstances, its *Sitze im Leben*. None of these hints presents a new basis for comparing it with the Zambian data.

1.2.a.c. Joshua 24:1-28

‘Society’ as ethnic group is evident in references to Terah and Nahor. ‘Society’ as covenant community is evident in references to the ‘fathers’ who worshipped Yahweh. In both cases, ‘society’ is trans-generational, extending to Joshua and the congregation at Shechem.

The existence of two different versions of this tradition indicates the versatility of mnemohistory in the process of re-telling and re-appropriation. Such versatility makes the circumstances and experiences of the covenant community the frameworks for remembering traditions.

The need for witnesses to covenant renewal indicates the communal nature of ‘choice’ and accountability in this ‘society’. The fact that a stone is part of these witnesses indicates how commonly ascribed meanings bring inanimate objects to participate in human discourse.

Designating a stone as a witness at Shechem finds a parallel in a congregation’s validating role in the Zambian research data. In both cases, there is harmony of perception. However, this is a rather tenuous comparison because the former is perception created by the society while the latter is from God. Society generated harmony is an epistemological consensus that assumes total agreement among its members. God generated harmony is rooted in the ‘listening’ capabilities of the ‘people of God’ without reference to total agreement.

1.2.a.d. The Prayer of Habakkuk

The book of Habakkuk is framed as dialogue between the prophet and God. As such, any references to ‘society’ are secondary and implicit.

The prayer is a ‘psalm’, a form that suggests the public arena. It also employs the language of traditions that we have judged to suggest socio-cultural continuities with neighbouring societies.

‘Report’ as a conflation of several traditions presupposes stages of appropriating traditions. It also suggests continuity in ‘society’ across generations. Finally, citation through evoking presumes enough common knowledge of material within ‘society’ for making the necessary associations based on minimal references.

The clearest parallel between the Zambian and the biblical data with respect to 'society' is the notion of the 'people of God'. In the former, the congregation is a local manifestation of this trans-generational and universal community. In the latter, the covenant-community-across-the-generations are the background 'society'. Its clearest local manifestation is the congregation at Shechem. As such, the clearest comparison is between the local congregation in the Zambian data and the congregation at Shechem.

Both sets of data place a high premium on 'consensus of witnesses'. In the Zambian data, the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the 'people of God' is critical to consensus whether in the congregation or in biblical texts as records of the testimony of inspired witnesses within the trans-generational community of the 'people of God'.

In the biblical data, hints of common spiritual perspective include ambiguities in correlation between plural subjects and singular verbs, song as group event, the public aspects of 'psalm' and 'lament' and the notion of 'report' or 'fame'. They include the difficulty of limiting the identities created by references to 'Asaph' and 'Jeduthun', the phenomenon of multiple versions of traditions and affirmations of continuity with the 'fathers'. They also include common volition to 'serve' Yahweh in Joshua 24.

Hints of common worldview and epistemology include the language of traditions held in common with neighbouring cultures and societies, the potency of 'reports' and the practice of citation through evoking. They also include the phenomenon of a stone as witness to the covenant.

1.2.b. Hierarchy

1.2.b.a. The Song at the Sea

In this text and its canonical antecedent, we encounter hierarchical considerations at several levels. Yahweh communicates with Pharaoh and the leaders of Israel through Moses his servant. His most extensive self-disclosure is availed to Moses, who, in turn represents him before pharaoh and the elders of Israel. This shows the priority

and authority that leaders hold in relation to their communities and the servant of God in relation to everybody else.

When 'fear' begins to take root, pharaoh communicates with God in a remote manner. The midwives disobey pharaoh's orders in an implicit manner. By contrast, the people magnify God directly.

We see, then, a hierarchy that extends from God to the people. The implication is that those lower in the hierarchy may address their superiors directly only where the substance of their address is complimentary. When communication is from the higher to the lower, it is mediated through messengers who participate in the authority and identity of their sender to the point of employing direct address. Therefore, Moses participates in the identity of God to the point of speaking in the first person and his actions are extensions of divine action.

In the Zambian data, preachers enjoy the same representative authority in relation to congregations that Moses enjoyed in relation to pharaoh and the leaders of Israel. They hear from God on behalf of the people and communicate God's messages to them. The proviso that such function is subject to evaluation by the testimony of the Spirit of God in the people is perhaps a parallel of the function of 'signs' in the Exodus narrative⁴ where the 'signs' are presumably self-authenticating.

1.2.b.b. Ps 77:1-21

References to 'Asaph', 'Jeduthun' and the 'fathers' evidence the enduring place of key ancestors in this society. They continue to be reference points and even to spawn new identities in subsequent generations.

This speech event reveals the impact of hierarchical considerations in communication. In the lament sections, the psalmist uses the third person singular suggesting a reticence to question God directly. By contrast, in the complimentary sections, the recital of the deeds of Yahweh, he employs both direct address and language that evokes Canaanite mythical traditions. This seemingly supports our hypothesis that communication from the lesser to the greater is implicit and indirect

⁴ Exod 4 :1-9.

unless complimentary. That Ps 77 is also supplicatory makes it an appeal to a superior authority.

Preachers in the Zambian data address God directly in supplication, the only material containing communication with God. However, that material lacks a basis for exploring hierarchical stratification in the social organisation of community because this falls outside the scope of the data collected for this research.

1.2.b.c. Joshua 24:1-28

Like Moses before him, Joshua addresses the nation through leaders who have the authority to make decisions on behalf of the people. His hierarchical priority over them makes his confession of continuity with the 'fathers' both exemplary and prescriptive in addition to his explicit challenge. The 'fathers' are prior to Joshua and Joshua is prior to the leaders.

He recites Israel's history as Yahweh's servant, making his interpretation, Yahweh's interpretation. He recalls Israel's origins in Terah and Nahor, ancestors and therefore hierarchically prior, in aid of his intention to influence their choice. There are, therefore, three hierarchically superior advocates for the case for choosing to 'serve' Yahweh: Yahweh's testimony, the history of the 'fathers' and Joshua.

The priority of Yahweh and his servants is replicated in the Zambian research data's priority of God and his servants, the preachers. Likewise, the 'fathers' in the biblical material are embraced as 'fathers' to the 'people of God' universal. However, consideration of ancestors from a purely ethnic base is outside the scope of the Zambian research.

1.2.b.d. The Prayer of Habakkuk

As a prayer, this psalm also illustrates the impact of hierarchical considerations in communication with God. Supplication sections, as also doxological ones (2B₁-B₃; 8B₁-15B) employ direct address. The latter also employ the language of Canaanite mythical traditions.

To summarize, then, God is prior in hierarchy and the final court of appeal in both sets of data. Such 'appeal' includes petition, lament and highest praise. He

communicates through his servants. He also communes with and reveals his counsels to his servants. As those who are epistemologically prior, these servants stand before their people as God's representatives capable of mediating revelation directly from God to the people.

In that the Zambian data is a compendium of sermons and interviews, it does not provide a basis for analysing the equivalent of God addressing the 'people of God' through its leaders outside the sermon event. By contrast, the Exodus narrative supplies a basis for hierarchical communication involving several layers of society. Consequently, a comparison of hierarchical dynamics outside the sermon event is not possible.

However, the Zambian data accords us several instances of direct communication with God in the form of communal petition.⁵ Prayer precedes or accompanies virtually every sermon. In all cases, God is presumed to be present and is addressed directly thereby evidencing that *complimentary* and *supplicatory* communication with God may employ direct address.

1.3. Concreteness

Concreteness refers to graphic presentation in language and concept in the data. We found concreteness to be the most pervasive feature in the Zambian research data. For ease of analysis, we examined it in relation to a number of categories and sub-categories. We will follow those categories here.

1.3.a. Concreteness and the 'people of God'

In the Zambian research data, the *experiences* of being human and 'knowing' God are the bases for affirming continuities with all human beings and with 'the people of God' in every generation. Both experiences presume God as creator. 'Knowing God' refers to active interaction between God and his people. The dynamics of this interaction are the same for all the people of God in every generation. Therefore, the 'people of God' are continuous in all generations because they share the *same*

⁵ Palula, p. 1, 6; Tembo, p. 1; Nkhonjera, p. 1; Phiri, "Excursus XIV," p. 1; Mbewe, "Excursus XV," p. 1-2; and Makukula, p. 1.

experiences in two fundamental areas of existence: humanity from God and humanity in relationship with God.

Given the parameters set by the inquiry, these experiences are generally restricted to the sermon event. There, the discussion revolved around how primarily the preacher but also the congregants interacted with God in the reception, communication and validation of revelation from God. The ‘people of God’ are those who interact with God. The biblical data evidenced concreteness as follows.

1.3.a.a. Song at the Sea

Encounter is the basis for ‘knowing’ Yahweh for Moses, pharaoh and Israel. Moses ‘knew’ Yahweh when he encountered him at the burning bush. Pharaoh and Israel ‘knew’ him through the ‘signs’ that he performed in their midst. One such ‘sign’ is the inspiration for the Song as the extended celebration of the Exodus event in the Song shows. This suggests that ‘knowledge’ of Yahweh is rooted in an *encounter* or *experience* with him.

We noted that encounter with Yahweh is the experience of each of the ‘fathers’ celebrated in the narrative. Moses, the children of Israel and the Egyptians are all conscious of the immanence and activity of Yahweh in the Exodus narrative. Theological interpretation is unequivocal in this account and includes an awareness that Yahweh’s activities were on behalf of his people, Israel. ‘Fear’ abroad indicates the extent of such knowledge and interpretation.

1.3.a.b. Ps 77:1-21

We concluded that this material lends itself to multiple *Sitze im Leben* because it reflects the experiences of the ‘people of God’ in multiple contexts. This supports the premise that the ‘people of God’ share the same experiences in all generations. Therefore, the interaction in the material, irrespective of its historical particularities, informs the experiences of the ‘people of God’ across the generations.

The public nature of ‘psalm’ and intimate nature of ‘lament’ also imply the generic nature of its substance to the ‘people of God’ in all generations. All may empathise with its intimacy and expressions.

As speech event, this psalm exemplifies in concrete terms relating with God. The lament is in part⁶ inquiry into the perceived dearth of divine activity, the ‘right hand of God’, in the present.

The striking similarities between the psalm and the Song at the Sea invite the conclusion arrived at there that the theological interpretation of the Exodus event was unequivocal. This identifies lament as ‘complaint within faith’ by the ‘people of God’.

Reference to Jacob and Joseph as ‘fathers’ also invites the earlier conclusion that ‘fathers’ celebrated are those who established precedence in the ‘knowledge’ of Yahweh. ‘Sons’ are those who identify with the spiritual traditions of the ‘fathers’.

1.3.a.c. Joshua 24:1-28

The plurality of reception traditions of Joshua shows that ‘didactic remembering’ is not constrained by specific versions in the historiography of this society. Influencing successive generations is part of remembering leading to constant re-shaping of traditions to address new scenarios. This suggests that both versions of Joshua were shaped by the exigencies of specific faith communities. The local need here is to consolidate faith for a generation that has inherited the covenant promise of land, but was not part of the generations that received the promises.⁷

Joshua bases his appeal for covenant renewal in part on the spiritual experiences of the ‘fathers’. He intends that this congregation should understand these experiences to be reflective of their own making as the ‘people of God’ continuous with the ‘fathers’.

In his prophetic stance, Joshua is at once a messenger of Yahweh and an example of walking in the traditions of the ‘fathers’. As messenger, he functions as a prophet, bringing God’s message to the people. As leader of the people, he confesses continuity with the ‘fathers’. Together, these declarations constitute the prescriptive

⁶ There are several other possible reasons for lament, including the cathartic value of expressing perplexity and anxiety to God for the ‘people of God’. C.f. Phil 4:6-7 – “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus” (NASB).

⁷ Num 14:20-25.

argument alluded to above whose effect is to challenge the people to embrace their identity as the 'people of God' continuous with the 'fathers'. In the end, the discourse leading to covenant renewal revolves around cycles of acceptance of this challenge on the part of the leaders of the people.

The respondents in the Zambian research fully see themselves as the 'people of God' whose circumstances and needs must influence the interpretation of the Scriptures. They also see their needs as similar in kind to those in the Scriptures in that the spiritual malaise and resolutions in the Scriptures are paradigmatic for all who serve God.

1.3.a.d. The Prayer of Habakkuk

Lack of biographical data in this material makes spiritual interaction between God and prophet the issue of focus. Its genre as 'psalm' makes it amenable to public appropriation.

'Report' is a theological extrapolation from a synoptic analysis of several traditions of 'divine comings'. Since the experience of God coming to the aid of his people is the norm, his perceived passivity in the present is out of character and occasions petition for divine intervention against 'the house of the wicked' (13B₁).

As was the case with Ps 77, the prophet's dialogue with God exemplifies the concrete interaction possible between God and his people within the framework of covenant. It goes further than the Zambian research data in evidencing on a grander scale the nature and extent of dialogue with God.

To summarize, the biblical data does not include consideration of unqualified human experience as a basis for commonality for all humanity. This is probably the case because specific issues within covenant are the frameworks of the selected texts. Therefore, God as creator of all and a fraternity of the 'people of God' beyond Israel are basic to the Zambian data but not to the biblical data.

However, there are several references and allusions to commonality based on shared spiritual experience in both sets of data although, in Zambian data, this was limited to spiritual experiences in relation to the sermon event.

Encounter with God in the production of 'knowledge' is common to Moses, pharaoh and Israel in Exodus. The 'fathers' alluded to were those who were privy to such

self-disclosure. Such experiences are the basis of celebration (the Song), lament (Ps 77), challenge (Josh 24) and petition (Hab 3).

The applicability to multiple *Sitze im Leben* for the psalms and the Song⁸ suggests common use by the ‘people of God’, which in turn suggests common spiritual experiences. This in turn suggests that celebration, lament and prayer are common spiritual experiences for the ‘people of God’. Direct address, i.e. speech event, exemplifies the concrete nature of dialogue with God predicated on consciousness of presence.

Differences in the traditions of Joshua 24 illustrate the versatility of mnemohistory and its connectedness to the circumstances of subsequent generations of the ‘people of God’. Retracing the spiritual pilgrimage of the ‘fathers’ from paganism to ‘serving’ Yahweh and inviting the people into this pilgrimage as a device for securing covenant renewal shows the centrality of shared spiritual experiences in Israel’s identity as the ‘people of God’.

1.3.b. Concreteness in the unity of Scripture

In the Zambian research data, identity of God as revealer precedes discussion of the nature of Scripture and gives Scripture its status. In addition, Scripture is validated at the subjective level of spiritual experience. It is the customary experience of divine revelation, at times through Scripture and at times apart from it though often related to it in some way, which retroactively justifies the status of Scripture as inspired and authoritative quite apart from historical critical considerations.

The participants in this activity, a sovereign and holy God and the ‘people of God’, remain the same in every generation. As long as these endure, the Scriptures continue to reflect life-giving instruction⁹ since the experiences of the people of God are generic in every generation.

For the same reason, the praxes and socio-historical realities in Scripture do not circumscribe its teachings although they reveal the meanings that form the basis on

⁸ Note the discussion about its pre-existence in other forms and contexts, pp. 157-159.

⁹ For a similar position in the New Testament, see Heb 4:12: “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (NASB).

which further appropriation is legitimate. Complete disregard for and departure from these meanings is akin to misrepresenting Scripture. This creates a tension between the historical critical meanings of biblical texts and the revealing activities of the Spirit of God in new circumstances and contexts for the 'people of God'.

Overall, the data does not resolve this tension by choosing one over the other, although individual respondents seem to do so in practice. Rather, it resolves it by affirming both though not on an equal footing. The revealing activity of the Spirit of God is prior to and critical to exegesis. Exegesis apart from the revealing activity of the Spirit is inadequate, pitting human epistemological tools against divine realities. For the same reason, historical critical tools ultimately do not arbitrate between different interpretations of biblical texts. This is the preserve of the Holy Spirit and the related phenomenon of 'impact', the product of a spiritual dialectic between God and the human spirit.

Epistemological analysis of the biblical pericopes for concreteness in relation to the unity and continuity of Scripture revealed the following.

1.3.b.a. The Song at the Sea

Here, 'knowledge' of God is closely related to his actions. He is a 'man of war', 'their God', their 'strength' and their 'salvation' in keeping with his acts of war against Egypt for the deliverance of his people. We noted that 'the God of our fathers' also presumes the encounters that the 'fathers' in question had with God. The traditions of the 'fathers' constitute the nearest parallels to Scripture.

'Report' of Yahweh's acts of war generates trepidation abroad. However, 'knowledge' only follows witnessing the acts of Yahweh. For Israel, this 'knowledge' produces faith and establishes their continuity with the 'fathers'. In hindsight, it also generates the theological interpretation of Moses' actions on behalf of Yahweh in the Song. In that the exodus event is the immediate 'tradition' appropriated theologically here, we have an illustration of the centrality of encounter in tradition.

As resource for theological appropriation, the traditions of the 'fathers' and the exodus event are the equivalent of Scripture in the Zambian data.

1.3.b.b. Ps 77:1-21

Difficulty in identifying the origins of this material suggests a tradition of collecting and preserving material that does not base genuineness of material on resolving such questions. The inadvisability of limiting the material to a single *Sitz im Leben* suggests a practice of appropriation that considers multiple contexts as legitimate. This suggests that the value of this material lies in its ability to reflect and inform the experiences of the 'people of God' in different contexts and generations. In that this material is part of Scripture, we may argue that Scripture is characteristically that which reflects and informs the experiences of the 'people of God' in every generation. Questions of *Sitz im Leben* and origin are secondary to this feature.

The public nature of 'psalm' and the intimacy in 'lament' support the notion that the material reflects and informs the experiences of many. For this reason, an apparently individual psalm in form is also a public psalm.

Allusion to the 'fathers', Jacob and Joseph, betrays an awareness of the importance of these key ancestors (and their stories) in the experiences of the 'people of God'. Finally, the psalm's affinities with the Song suggest that appropriations of traditions are capable of begetting other appropriations within mnemohistory.

The notion of 'evolving' traditions within the framework of covenant has no parallel in the Zambian data where Scripture refers to a closed record. However, Scripture *operates* the way the traditions do in the biblical data. They are resources in the context of 'serving God' for the instruction of successive generations of the 'people of God'.

1.3.b.c. Joshua 24:1-28

Differences in the MT and LXX versions of this text suggest that appropriation adapts traditions to meet specific needs. This militates against judging the 'purity' or fidelity of an appropriation based on the detail it includes or omits. We may only examine differences in ideological 'engineering' between received traditions with a view to understand better the ways in which needs influence the appropriation of traditions. For example, Joshua adapts the traditions of the 'fathers' to accomplish covenant renewal at Shechem. Apparently, the integrity of an appropriation does not lie in its fidelity to earlier versions but in a substantive continuity that is versatile.

As in the two texts above, references to the ‘fathers’ suggest knowledge of traditions that are a resource for appropriation. Continuity among the ‘people of God’ legitimates such appropriation. It is a basis for both Joshua’s challenge and the leaders’ pledge of allegiance to the covenant.

Joshua’s adaptation highlights the pagan origins of particular ‘fathers’ and Yahweh’s role in ‘giving’ Israel victory in conflicts and inheritances thereby demonstrating his covenant faithfulness. This is the basis for the challenge to ‘fear’, ‘serve’, ‘turn-aside’ and ‘choose’ Yahweh and covenant renewal. Likewise, the leaders of Israel reciprocate by identifying with the same history and interpretation.

Identifying with the traditions of the ‘fathers’ is also the basis for a ‘hermeneutic of reflection’ and a ‘hermeneutic of empathy’ in the Zambian data. However, the latter may only revisit a closed corpus while the appropriations in the biblical data are part of the process of establishing the Hebrew Bible.

1.3.b.d. The Prayer of Habakkuk

Differences in genre between the first two chapters and the third evidence theological expression that is continuous through different genres. ‘Report’ as a conflation of several traditions of God coming to the aid of his people demonstrates the versatility that appropriations enjoy in their use of traditions. They may appropriate them at different levels of detail and for different purposes.

Inclusion of the language of Canaanite mythology shows that appropriations of Israel’s traditions employ epistemological tools that are common to their region and times. Appropriators are children of their environments. Unity and continuity of Scripture does not preclude evoking common traditions with other cultures. However, the fact that such language is adopted for fresh use indicates that the user of a language controls its meanings irrespective of what the language means elsewhere.

Citation by evoking presumes widespread and intimate knowledge of traditions by the audience. Therefore, entire material can be brought into a discourse by including a word or a phrase. We noted this epistemological feature in operation in the Zambian research data.

We have already noted that traditions that inform theological appropriation in the biblical data function the same way as Scripture in the Zambian data without having the same level of closure. Appropriations operate within the epistemological frameworks of the appropriators, including their socio-cultural and historical realities in both sets of data.

The fact that Ps 77 bears close similarities with the Song at the Sea indicates that there is cumulative use of these traditions as opposed to recourse to a particular version. The practice of citation by evoking presupposes wide spread knowledge of such traditions.

Paradigmatic references to the 'fathers' and the same implication from the ambiguities in and inadvisability of limiting psalms to particular historical contexts suggests that they also inform the covenant life of subsequent generations.

Adaptation of material to specific contexts and needs indicates that specific manifestations of the people of God are the starting point in appropriation. The prominence of arguments based on 'continuity with the fathers' and an expectation that God works in characteristic ways indicate the generic nature of 'serving God'.

Concrete experience is the locus for spiritual discourse with God in both sets of data. In the Zambian data, the sermon event is such discourse, occurring in the context of an immanent and active God. Such discourse is also retroactively the basis for upholding the inspiration, authority and integrity of Scripture as a record of revelatory encounters within the meta-narrative of God's involvement in the world.

In the biblical data, this discourse is evident at various levels. Speech event as different kinds of discourse is attested in the Song, the Exodus narrative, Ps 77, and Hab 3. In Josh 24, Joshua speaks as a prophet.

All the above attests to a rich and continuous dynamic of encounter with God within covenant that is fundamental to the material. Traditions, both the versatile ones for Israel and Scripture for the Zambian data, are repositories of these experiences and resource for further appropriation.

1.3.c. Concreteness in the Immanence of God

In the Zambian research data, the immanence of God as the phenomenological presence of the Holy Spirit among the 'people of God' is foundational to thought and

practice. We distinguished between immanence of God with respect to redemption and revelation. For the sake of comparison with the biblical data, we consider findings from those categories in one section here.

Concreteness in the immanence of God is an extension of the discussion immediately preceding. However, the focus here is on the implications of God's revealing presence for redemption and the dynamics in the sermon event.

Redemption is a state (as Scripture was a product) attained by those who respond positively to spiritual vision, or conviction. God reveals himself and invites people to submit to him and his ways. This leads to transformation. This transaction is the genesis of life under the dominion of God, the equivalent of 'serving God'. 'Serving God' is the same for Israel and the Christian believer.

Spiritual vision is distinguished based on the identity of the spirit beings doing the 'revealing' in keeping with the polarity between God and Satan. For example, witchdoctors receive revelation from demonic spirits as part of their diagnostic and therapeutic powers in the same manner that servants of God receive revelation from the Holy Spirit as part of their ministry to the 'people of God'.

Revelation in the sermon event refers to God's revealing activities to its various participants. Preachers receive disclosures of the meanings of Scripture during and out with regular Bible study, of the spiritual needs of the people and of the appropriate texts for addressing these needs. Such disclosures may also occur during sermon delivery. Revelation here is inspired communication in the senses of coming from God and *possessing a potency to reveal* in the hearer.

Hearers receive witness, also called 'impact', regarding the authenticity of the messages preached. On this basis they assess the credibility of a preacher and a message. We note, therefore, that the heart of epistemological activity in the sermon event is the concrete phenomenon of spiritual rapport between God and people. The biblical data betrays concreteness in the immanence of God as follows.

1.3.c.a. The Song at the Sea

We have identified all the psalms, including this one, as speech events involving God and his people. This material is celebration of the deliverance occasioned and inspired by manifestations of Yahweh's right hand in the Exodus narrative. Israel

celebrates God as a 'man of war', her 'God', her 'strength', her 'song' and her 'salvation'.

That the Song is direct praise presumes a consciousness that they are in God's presence. The people magnify God directly for their deliverance. However, this is a monologue and therefore, in the absence of reciprocal communication from God, we cannot assume that they could engage God in conversation the way Moses could. Indeed, the discourse in the Exodus narrative suggests that while Israel may praise God directly, she requires the mediation of Moses for dialogue. In the *Zambian data*, all the 'people of God' enjoy equal access to God and may receive communication from God directly.

1.3.c.b. Ps 77:1-21

The intimacy of 'lament' presupposes the context of dialogue with an immanent God. It is also speech event mediated through direct address. The substance of the lament is absence of divine favour predicated on the premise of divine ontological and epistemological involvement in the drama of life. The psalmist expects God to be involved in all aspects of life.

References to 'spirit' (7B₂), 'heart' (7B₁) and 'muse' (13A₁, A₂) all referring to the realm of subjective consciousness, indicate that this is the sphere of human engagement with the immanent God. The psalmist 'talks' and 'feels' in the presence of God.

This psalm is also a monologue. As such, we cannot judge either way whether God communicates back. However, the intimacy of expressions suggests that God is present and listening, as was the case in the *Zambian research data*.

1.3.c.c. Joshua 24:1-28

Joshua exemplifies the imputed authority of God's messengers when he speaks *with* the words of God. This is a parallel to the authority and epistemological priority of preachers in the *Zambian research data*. We noted that Joshua's stance did not warrant the conclusion that his speech is a revelation event. However, it presupposes 'revelation' at some point. We could have here, then, a combination of revelation

from God and its communication with some ambiguity regarding the time and nature of the revelation.

Identifying with the ‘fathers’ is a means of demonstrating continuity in their faith for both Joshua and the leaders. We have already noted that ‘experience’ is integral to the faith of the ‘fathers’ in these traditions.

Outside the covenant fraternity, Balak solicits for a curse, an appeal to spiritual intervention, to defeat Israel in battle. This suggests that appeal to spiritual authority is also common practice for people who worship ‘other gods’ although, paradoxically, Balaam solicits for help from Yahweh. We noted that curse represents recourse to more potent weaponry. The parallel in the Zambian data is the perception that witchdoctors ply their trade by consulting ‘other’ spirits.

1.3.c.d. The Prayer of Habakkuk

In this speech event, there is dialogue. The prophet laments,¹⁰ inquires¹¹ and prays. The dialogue suggests the context of revelation events. Genre differences between the first two chapters and the third indicate, then, that dialogue within revelation event is not restricted to particular forms of expression.

The petition for a ‘revival of deeds in the midst of the years’ is a petition for divine action, fresh manifestations of the ‘right hand’ of God. Yahweh’s responses suggest that the impending military conquests by the Chaldeans will be such manifestation albeit not through the sort of instruments that the prophet would associate him with.

One result of this dialogue is to transform the prophet’s theology. Apparent indicators of divine withdrawal (17A₁-A₆) no longer intimate that Yahweh has abrogated his covenant obligations towards his people. In addition, God’s instruments may include the actions of nations that do not acknowledge him at all.

To summarize, redemption in the Zambian research data is the equivalent of ‘serving God’ in the biblical data, a consequence of the covenant relationship presumed in it. Revelation as both monologue and dialogue is attested in the biblical data.

¹⁰ See the characteristic “How long O Lord?” (עַד-אַיָּן יְהוָה), Hab 1:2. The ‘lament’ section is contained in 1:2-4.

¹¹ Hab 1:12-17.

Monologue, particularly prayer, is attested in the Zambian data although allusions to dialogue are also present. Acts of self-disclosure are the basis for praise, lament, challenge and prayer in the biblical data. They also are presumed in the traditions of the 'fathers'. The expectation of miracles in the Zambian data is a continuation of this understanding in as much as the spirituality in it is a continuation of biblical spirituality.

In both sets of data, therefore, revelation is part of the experience of the 'people of God'. The only variables are the details of such revelation. Speech event as group communication with God is also evident in both sets of data. In the Zambian data, prayer invoking God's help, protection and the like accompanies each sermon.¹² In the biblical data, the 'people of God' praise, inquire of, express perplexity and lament, petition and confess God in his presence. The constant in each case is concrete audience with God.

1.3.d. Concreteness in communication

In the Zambian data, concreteness is the most predominant feature of the nature and tools of communication. Concreteness here means the tendency towards the phenomenological in communication. It shows an epistemological consciousness and predisposition that manifests in communication tools, language and idiom.

Concreteness in communication and presumption of the nature of the biblical material is equally evident both in those who emphasize the revealing activities of the Holy Spirit and in those who emphasize critical engagement with the texts using historical critical tools. The primacy of comprehension, defined to include spiritual benefit for the hearer, makes engagement with the audience's epistemological construct and life-settings imperative.

Therefore, the interpreter needs to proceed *through* African ways of thinking and address *African needs*. We therefore must understand 'interpretation' comprehensively as both the exegetical and homiletical tasks meet in the same activity. For this reason, isotopic reading of the spiritual experiences of the 'people of God' in the Scriptures, what we also call a 'hermeneutic of reflection' and a

¹² We classify this as group communication in spite of the fact that it was individuals praying because they prayed on behalf of groups.

‘hermeneutic of empathy’, is the most common method of biblical interpretation because it combines the two aspects leading to immediate spiritual benefit.

However, in addition to assuming common spiritual experiences for the ‘people of God’, the respondents assumed similarities in epistemological construct between themselves and the biblical material. This led many to presume that they knew how the language and idiom in the biblical material conveyed meanings.

The Zambian research data betrays a common epistemological construct with respect to language and idiom in the following ways. Both those who preached in vernacular Bantu languages and those who preached in English operated within the African epistemological construct.¹³ Local cultural expressions informed the expositions of concepts in the biblical texts. The fact that some African social-cultural expressions approximate biblical ones is evident from a casual reading of the Old Testament¹⁴ although this does not mean congruency in every respect.

The Zambian research data betrays a predisposition towards imagery and figurative expression. In addition, we find an expectation that traditions are common knowledge to both the preachers and their congregations leading to cross-referencing by evoking. Minimal reference, including a word or concise phrases, is sufficient.

The respondents also assume that the biblical material contains imagery and must be read figuratively. For instance, two respondents made *typological* and *symbolic* associations when interpreting the Parable of the Prodigal Son with different results. They resolve the potentially problematic feature of sharing the same epistemological pattern by affirming the priority of the Holy Spirit in supplying the associations as revelation.

Concrete perceiving and communicating of material includes portraying the internal thought processes of biblical characters through *hypothetical re-enactment* intended to ‘recreate’ the thought processes *as they happened*. This is a ‘hermeneutic of

¹³ Bantu languages evidence the same epistemological framework and share similar semantic and syntactical constructs.

¹⁴ For example, ‘song’ and ‘singing’ in the context of joy, praise, celebration, etc is a common feature in the psalms and other biblical texts. For שיר and זמר, see Judg 5:3; 2 Sam 22:50; Ps 7:18 (7:17); 9:3 (9:2), 12 (11); 18:50 (18:49); 30:5 (30:4) and 47:7 (47:6). For שיר, see Judg 5:12; 1 Chr 6:16; 15:16; Ps 33:3; 40:4 (40:3); 144:9; 149:1; Isa 23:16 and 42:10. For ‘dance’ (קָדוּל) in the context of ‘praise’ (הִלֵּל), see, Ps 30:12 (30:11); 149:3; 150:4; Jer 31:4, 13 and Lam 5:15.

empathy', isotopic reading without the illusion that the re-enactment is exactly as it happened. It is merely a device for 'entering' the material.

It includes perceiving biblical terms through African socio-cultural realities. For example, local expressions of 'praise' are read into the texts because 'praise must be visible'. 'Praise' and other terms are presumed to be generic and capable of several nuances in keeping with local etymologies. It includes amassing textual witnesses in support of teachings in keeping with local Chewa practice and understanding extended commentary as evidencing the importance of a matter. We noted, however that cross-referencing also stems from the theological presupposition that Scripture coheres in its testimony.

Concrete expressions include a wealth of typological and symbolic readings of the biblical texts. Often times, such readings are arguably outside historical critical possibilities in the texts used. They include a proliferation of repetitive modes of argumentation, figures of speech, metaphors and parables.

The respondents argue that such pedagogy makes the people to understand the message 'quicker' or 'easier'. For example, Millar Phiri uses a fable as a vehicle for delivering his sermon and enabling him to create some distance, a sort of euphemism, particularly because his message contained elements of rebuke and challenge. This demonstrates a predisposition for concrete and indirect communication.

In one case, understanding epistemological similarities between Africans and the biblical material led a respondent to assume the same socio-cultural realities as well. As such, he read his text through local socio-cultural realities.¹⁵

Consideration of other possible reasons for the epistemology in the Zambian data suggested a number of reasons including Christian tradition and theological training. However, there is no consistent correlation between theological training, Christian tradition, and hermeneutic. The research could not establish conclusively that these influences led to the adoption of an epistemological pattern other than the Bantu one for all respondents. The biblical data evidences concreteness in communication as follows.

¹⁵ Cf. the way Yesaya Banda read the parable of the demoniac, p. 110.

1.3.d.a. *The Song at the Sea*

The Song is poetic and figurative representation of the Exodus narrative. It presupposes an epistemological constitution that is versatile enough to re-package material in different forms of expression without mutation of meanings. Here, this entails interpreting the narratives using passive and active expression, incorporating and reorienting mythological language and dramatic re-enactment. It includes the use of such figures of speech as metaphor and personification. It also includes poetic formatting and aesthetic framing.¹⁶

Poetic features include possible fluidness of identity between plural and singular subjects and possible portrayal of group conviction and feeling by singular references. Other features of this communication evidence concreteness as follows.

Emphasis is expressed by juxtapositioning words derived from the same root consonants evidencing the phenomenon of indicating emphasis by repetition of a semantic unit. 'Knowledge' of Yahweh stems from 'signs' and is a comprehensive concept that includes obedience to God. Therefore, actions occasion 'knowledge'.

'Father' is versatile. Here, it refers to ancestors several generations removed from the current stock of Israel namely Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.¹⁷

Hierarchy and the substance of communication determine manner of communication. Therefore, high praise for God invites direct address from the people. By contrast, the midwives in the Exodus narrative disobey pharaoh's command in a clandestine manner. God speaks to the people and pharaoh through intermediaries. Moses consults Yahweh on behalf of the people and pharaoh and speaks to them through Aaron. However, in the Song, the people 'praise' Yahweh directly. This suggests that those lowly in hierarchy may only address their superiors indirectly except when the substance of their communication is complimentary.

Figurative features include the following. Rhetorical questions communicate divine attributes.¹⁸ Re-enactment employs the device of hypothetical speech event.¹⁹ High praise employs the language of *Chaoskampf*, traditions that predate Israel and are

¹⁶ Therefore, 'he is surely exalted' (1C₁) is the frame for the extensive celebration and re-enactment of the Exodus event that characterizes the Song.

¹⁷ Cf. Exod 3:6, 15; 4:5.

¹⁸ 11A-C₂.

¹⁹ 9-10A-G.

held in common with other societies. Finally, Moses' actions and communication²⁰ on behalf of Yahweh are extensions of Yahweh's actions and communication. In a sense, Moses executes the acts of God.

Priority of comprehension entailed harnessing the epistemological construct and socio-cultural realities of local people in the Zambian research data. This parallels the exploitation of *Chaoskampf* for communication purposes in the biblical data. It also compares favourably with the genre changes and evidence of hierarchical considerations in the Song. Predisposition for imagery permeated the Zambian data and preachers bore imputed authority. These are close parallels to the same predisposition here and Moses' representation of Yahweh.

1.3.d.b. Ps 77:1-21

The public nature of 'psalm' and the intimacy of 'lament' suggest a harmony of mind and feeling among the 'people of God'. Therefore, praise, lament and petition may be the expression of several people sharing common thoughts and feelings or individuals who, nonetheless, can be paradigmatic for groups.

'Psalm' also entails vocalisation thereby implying that utterance is a feature of dialogue with God. However, in that 'my voice to God' encompasses physical disquiet, audible expression and reflection, we should understand dialogue to include non-verbal communication.

In this material, utterance is pithy and stylised. Physical action blends with mental state. Therefore, the expression 'a hand poured out' combines the presumed stance of a person in supplication with the despair of the soul. Elsewhere, sleeplessness is a consequence of 'God grasping the eyelids'. The language is phenomenological yet expresses both physical and mental states.

'Heart' is used for the inner person as a synonym of 'spirit'. Thus, the metaphorical sense of a physical organ represents a metaphysical reality. Rhetorical questions are tools for highlighting the bases for the appeal and the appeal itself.²¹ It is because God does not reject forever, has unceasing 'loving kindness', gives an enduring

²⁰ Cf. the Exodus narrative.

²¹ 8A-10B.

word, does not forget to be gracious and is compassionate in anger that the psalmist 'entreats' him for a manifestation of the unchanging 'right hand of the Most High'.

In apposition, extended 'remembering', 'meditating' and 'musing' upon the deeds and attributes of Yahweh reinforce the indirect message in the rhetorical questions. This parallels the view in the Zambian research data that extended commentary on a matter indirectly compounds its importance.

Rhetorical questions employ indirect references to God, preserving hierarchical distance. However, 'remembering' the deeds and attributes of Yah employs direct address and mythological language that is so similar to that in the Song at the Sea that there is a likelihood of a borrowing of sorts. This reinforces the view that the substance of communication governs its nature where hierarchical considerations play a role. Mythological language also supports the observations made above that language use is in accordance with the associations intended by the communicator. 'Remember' includes 'meditation', 'musing' and 'recall'. Therefore, it is a comprehensive term capable of multiple shades of meaning. 'Sons' is used in relation to ancestors far removed from this generation also evidencing the versatility of the term.

Finally, semantic and syntactic constructions in the psalm *invoke* the Song at the Sea. This illustrates the operation of citation by invoking as opposed to cross-referencing.

1.3.d.c. Joshua 24:1-28

Plurality of reception traditions of Joshua indicates that the needs and circumstances of a given people at a given time influence and shape appropriation of traditions. We may assume that such appropriations engage the epistemological construct of the people in question.

Joshua addresses the nation through its leaders and with the voice of God betraying the hierarchical stratification, distribution of authority and chain of communication in this society. His imputed authority is evident in his isotopic stance and representation of Yahweh in the actual 'cutting' of the covenant. Given that we judged this stance merely functional, it makes hypothetical re-enactment of a revelation event a communication device. Its intention is to convey the freshness and potency of direct communication from God to his people.

Joshua refers to 'fathers' to denote ancestors who 'served other gods'. His intention is to 'situate' Israel in her pagan origins based on continuity with those ancestors. This is a very graphic way of using an interpretation of history to revive the obligations of this congregation under the covenant.

He also invites Israel to renew covenant using three indirect tools of persuasion: (1) her continuity with past generations, (2) his personal continuity with the 'fathers' as their leader and (3) scepticism at their ability to serve Yahweh. The last point in particular is an indirect way of challenging them to adhere to the requirements of the covenant. It includes elaborate grounds for doing so. It is also a *euphemistic* device for rebuking them for their unfaithfulness by pointing out indirectly the specific points where they violate the covenant and which they need to address. The combined effect of these indirect tools of persuasion is immense coercive power.

Wa'eqtals chart Yahweh's acts of covenant faithfulness in this interpretation history. Their absence in the evolution of the narrative invites interpretation. For instance, the fact that Yahweh 'gives' Esau Mount Seir to inherit²² but Jacob 'goes down to Egypt'²³ invites the reader to understand the tentativeness of Jacob's journey to Egypt and to wait for further developments. In the end, Jacob will also be 'given' an inheritance.²⁴ Further, the fact that Jacob's inheritance is described *extensively* communicates its relative superiority to Esau's inheritance.

Balak's appeal to Balaam to curse Israel comes at the end of a list of conflicts west of the Jordan. We have already noted that this threat is potentially more serious than the rest because of its appeal to spiritual help. Here, *chronology* supports the fact that it represents an *escalation* of opposition. In keeping with this cue, the greatest threat is across the river as evident from the *very extensive list* of the adversaries involved.²⁵ Here, then, as above, extensive listing indicates magnitude. All the above are concrete and indirect ways of communicating that require specific epistemological skills.

²² Josh 24:4b.

²³ Josh 24:4c.

²⁴ Josh 24:13a-d.

²⁵ Josh 24:11b.

‘Choose’ is a comprehensive concept that includes attitude (‘fear’) and volition (‘turn aside’). Like ‘remember’, and ‘sons’, it conforms to the theory that terms tend to be holistic and capable of multiple nuances.

The erection of a stone as a complimentary witness to covenant pledges indicates that people give and control the meanings that words, actions and artefacts embody.

Therefore, meanings, including those in *symbolism*, are ultimately those ascribed by users in a particular context even if the words, actions and artefacts may carry different meanings elsewhere.

1.3.d.d. The Prayer of Habakkuk

Differences in genre between the first two chapters and the third evidence the versatile nature of communication. This prayer is song and poetry. It is structured in such a way that parts are sung twice with the second being the fuller expression of the first.²⁶

The prayer ‘cannibalises’ several traditions to form one ‘report’. These traditions are in relation to God coming to the aid of his people, the subject that forms the basis for prayer²⁷, faith²⁸ and worship²⁹ by the prophet. This shows the place of traditions for subsequent generations in forming understandings that form the basis for relating with God. In the *Zambian research data*, this is the function of Scripture.

As was the case in the Song and Ps 77, the language of celebration of God’s acts in the ‘report’ evokes Canaanite myths in addition to Greek and oriental thought. This indicates the place of a prevailing cosmology in communication. It compares with the priority of the worldview, epistemological construct and circumstances of the audience in the *Zambian data*.

Indicators of a propensity for figurative expression in this material include symbolism,³⁰ partitive reference for several nations and anthropomorphic language

²⁶ Pp. 229-230.

²⁷ 2B₁-B₃.

²⁸ 16C-18B₂.

²⁹ 19.

³⁰ For instance, lightning is the arrows and spear of Yahweh.

for mountains and hills and in references to Canaanite myths. Rhetorical questions invite the interlocutor into the resolution of meanings. The fact that this communication is with God indicates that the prophet engages even God from his epistemological construct and socio-cultural realities.

The material also contains several instances of citation through evoking by the inclusion of words or phrases. As already noted, this device presupposes the fact that the interlocutor is an epistemological insider, one thoroughly acquainted with the material evoked.

In the description of the prophet's reaction to the 'report,'³¹ physiological states, external phenomena, are also indicators of internal states of turmoil. This shows the prevalence of phenomenological expression or concreteness in the prophet's epistemological construct. In addition, the presumed evidence of Yahweh's disfavour is phenomenological: fig trees that do not bud, vine trees without fruit, unproductive olive trees, barren fields and livestock enclosures without animals. This betrays theological interpretation of phenomena and circumstance and a holistic cosmology.

In the following section, we articulate this framework in general terms as far as the comparison between the two sets of data allowed. We also suggest ways in which we can exploit this foundation to build biblical hermeneutical methods that are epistemologically both biblical and African.

B. An epistemological foundation for African biblical hermeneutical methods

1. A profile of an African epistemological foundation for biblical hermeneutical methods

The pedantic and synoptic analysis of select epistemological categories in the two sets of data above shows the following continuities here presented as an epistemological foundation for African biblical hermeneutical methods.

³¹P. 209.

The epistemology extrapolated from the Zambian research data is an indication of the basis for the hermeneutical activity that goes on in southern Africa by Africans. It evidences an epistemological constitution and socio-cultural realities that are part of sub-Saharan African realities. Similarly, the epistemology extracted from the biblical research data sheds light on the basis for the intricate and complicated relationships between traditions and their appropriation and re-appropriations in the Scriptures. As such, this research can only speak definitely with respect to the two sets of data. It can only suggest broader implications for its findings.

In the previous section, we placed in juxtaposition the epistemological features that are common to both sets of data. Below, we articulate the composite picture of these features and suggest ways in which they can become the basis for African biblical hermeneutical methods.

1. a. Priority of the appropriating community

This tenet is methodological because it is the justification for the epistemological profile below and identifies the starting point. However, it is also epistemological because it comes from a specific worldview. In both sets of data, there is a devotional intent associated with biblical interpretation. It is reading for the ‘people of God’ or those, in the case of the Zambian research data, who would be included in this number. In the biblical data, it is for those who are already in covenant with God.

The needs and circumstances of the appropriating community (or individual) have priority in the interpretation process. This priority is comprehensive and includes their epistemological constitution, worldview, socio-cultural realities, spiritual condition and requirements. It is predicated on several considerations.

First, it reflects the fact that communication and hence comprehension demands thorough engagement with the hearer or reader. In other words, the second party in the communication process must be addressed *through* their epistemological pattern, worldview and socio-cultural realities for comprehension to occur. Where possible this should include language and idiom.

In the Zambian research, this means that the Bantu epistemological pattern, worldview and socio-cultural realities must be thoroughly engaged in biblical

interpretation. This is what will constitute the *translatability* of biblical interpretation in this context.³²

Second, spiritual relevance demands thorough engagement with the spiritual needs of the hearer or reader. In other words, the hearer or reader must be addressed therapeutically. This transforms biblical interpretation from the realm of exegesis to hermeneutics,³³ from merely descriptive activities within historical critical scholarship to a pneumatic exercise where the interpreter is an interested party.³⁴

Mere exposition of the biblical material is inadequate on two fronts. First, at best, it can only reveal what happened to particular groups of people faced with particular circumstances, mere lessons in history. Second, even within this restricted aim, historical critical scholarship continues to fail to resolve unequivocally ‘what really happened’, ‘why it happened’, ‘where it happened’, ‘when it happened’ and ‘to whom it happened’.

Until these questions are resolved, there is no reliable textual message to appropriate. The Scriptures are obscure, material for unending historical critical debates in scholarship and quite unsuitable for spiritual instruction and guidance. Among those for whom the integrity and authority of Scripture stands or falls on the resolution of such questions, this will logically lead to scepticism towards the whole edifice of faith.

However, when biblical interpretation is regarded to be a pneumatic activity, the critical ‘instrument’ for biblical exposition is not historical critical tools of scholarship but one’s engagement with the Spirit who both gave the Scriptures and reveals their message. This priority may use historical critical tools but is not restricted by them. It recognises a hierarchy among ‘tools’. Here, priority of audience

³² ‘Translatability’ refers to the process by which the faith moves from being conceptualised and practiced through foreign epistemological constructs and socio-cultural realities to being conceptualised and practiced through indigenous epistemological constructs and socio-cultural realities. Sanneh, 62, 172-173. Cf. Lamin Sanneh, “‘They Stooped to Conquer’: Vernacular Translation and the Social-Cultural Factor,” *RAL* 23, no. 1 (1992): 106.

³³ Fee and Stuart distinguish between exegesis, the “careful and systematic study of the Scripture to discover the original, intended meaning” that is basically a historical task, and hermeneutics, the narrower sense of seeking the contemporary relevance of texts. G. D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (London: Scripture Union, 1983), 20, 25.

³⁴ Childs expresses a similar sentiment when characterizes doing canonical Old Testament Theology as “theological reflection...[that] assumes not only a received tradition, but a faithful disposition by hearers who await the illumination of God’s Spirit”. Childs, *Old Testament Theology*, 12.

means priority of the spiritual interaction between God and humanity in biblical interpretation.

At this stage, the methodological merges with the epistemological and is informed by it. The centrality of pneumatic activity in the interpretation process is based on a worldview that is spiritual and holistic. It regards the world to be a product of divine creation. It upholds the reality and immanence of spirit beings in the world. There is no polarity between the world and spirit beings. It regards spirit beings to be above human beings and the rest of the created order in the hierarchy of beings.

1. b. Predisposition for imagery and figurative language

Predisposition for imagery and figurative language is a sub-feature of concreteness as tendency towards phenomenological tools of communication in epistemology. It includes figurative words, expressions and larger tools of communication. The two sets of data evidence the following common features.

Predisposition for imagery includes re-enactment and the use of stories as means for communicating concepts. Figurative language includes metaphor, personification, symbolism, simile and euphemism.

The point to note is that it is legitimate and expected, in the service of communication and comprehension, to employ imagery and figurative language. By extension, the full repertoire of figurative language and the creativity necessary for creating and deciphering imagery in the socio-cultural realities of the two sets of data are acceptable tools for conceptualization, interpretation and communication.

Phenomenological tools of communication include the use of stories and fables in preaching. They also include the use of the device of re-enactment in an effort to recreate the drama and use hypothetical speech events in an effort to recapture the immediacy and power of the original communication. Such communication indicates a preference for the concreteness of experience over secondary forms of communication.

Since Bantu readers are familiar with these tools from their context, they may legitimately employ their epistemological *skills* in deciphering imagery and figurative language and in following the nuances of story when reading the biblical material. These skills can be informed, therefore nuanced, by knowledge of the way

they operate in the Scriptures. However, the Bantu reader does not need to learn the epistemological sensitivities on which they are based.

The weakness of prior facility in these epistemological sensitivities is that facility may cause the Bantu reader to read the biblical material uncritically i.e. without recourse to the social-cultural realities, including language and idiom, in the material. Such a hermeneutic would result in the substitution of biblical epistemological and socio-cultural realities with Bantu ones and violate the principle of the priority of the epistemological construct and socio-cultural realities in the biblical texts in biblical hermeneutics.

Where critical knowledge is fully incorporated, this facility will enable the Bantu reader to grasp the relationships between imagery and figurative language and meanings quicker. Critical knowledge in this case would entail familiarisation with the history, socio-cultural realities, traditions, languages and repertoire of figurative communication in the biblical material.

1. c. Predisposition for concreteness in language

Predisposition for concreteness in language is a sub-feature of concreteness as tendency towards phenomenological markers of expression. It refers to the phenomenological nature of language and the pervasive nature of phenomenological expressions.

In both sets of data, mental states and reflection are expressed using phenomenological language. For example, 'in God's *perspective*' is expressed as 'in God's *eyes*', the already phenomenological '*snow*' is replaced with the equally phenomenological but culturally relevant '*cotton*'. The action of the hand raised in despair expresses the despair of a soul 'poured out'. 'God grasping the eyelids' expresses the mental turmoil occasioning sleeplessness.

Phenomenological expressions indicate a preference for concrete reference over abstraction and analysis. For this reason, the metaphorical senses of physical objects and the host of phenomena that appeal to the senses communicate abstract meanings.

This predisposition confirms what we discussed at a general level earlier. In Chapter 2, we noted the concreteness of biblical Hebrew.³⁵ We also noted the pervasive nature of concreteness in African epistemology as evidenced by the centrality of 'event' in perceptions of time, length of activity, markers of distance and activities as markers of time of day.³⁶

The above demonstrates that concrete references are intricate forms of expression that mask abstract thought and elaborate rationalisation. The simplicity of the language should not deceive us regarding its complexity. It is meant to invite the reader into the elaborate meanings that the expressions merely intimate. Narratives are meant to expose the reader directly to evolution of the drama thereby giving him or her chance to interpret the phenomena first hand.

In reality, there is no such thing as a 'first hand' occasion for those who are receiving a communication *through* another messenger, hence the widely acknowledged understanding that biblical narratives have gone through redaction processes to varying degrees in spite of their façade of originality. An appreciation of the nature of concrete communication also corrects the misconception that such expression is simplistic, deceptive, and even deficient³⁷ and in need of abstracting for a fuller understanding of its meanings.

In African biblical interpretation, such a realisation should lead to a discussion of the necessary skills for interpreting concrete expression based on a more realistic understanding of its nature. As epistemological insiders in such communication, Africans can play an important role in delineating its hermeneutic.

³⁵ Robert Alter, for instance, acknowledged the 'extraordinary concreteness' of biblical Hebrew and decried the tendency in Western scholarship to turn the 'pungency of the original into stale paraphrase' leading to the loss of how 'the text *intimates* its meaning'. Cf. p. 57.

³⁶ Chapter 2.

³⁷ In this regard, Ayo Bamgbose's argues that claims of the grammatical and syntactical paucity of African languages reflect the linguistic incompetence of the first collectors of language material: "The first collectors of language material in African languages were mainly missionaries, explorers and other enthusiasts who had little or no expertise in linguistic description. Confronted with a wide range of puzzling sounds in the languages they encountered, they often resorted to values in English or some other European language of the Roman alphabet. Thus, it was not unusual for a language that has seven vowels to be written with five letters." Bamgbose, 46.

1. d. Predisposition for comprehensiveness in language

Predisposition for comprehensiveness in language is a remote feature of concreteness in that it characterises concrete communication. It refers to the conciseness of epistemological markers or tools for expressing concepts. These primarily are words although the same expectation extends to larger constructions and even the perception of traditions.

The versatility of words like ‘fathers’, ‘voice’, ‘choose’, ‘remember’, ‘heart’ and ‘sons’ in the biblical data evidenced an epistemological premise that a word is inherently concise and capable of several nuances in actual use. This is what we meant by ‘comprehensiveness of language’. The presumed versatility of such words as ‘pit’, ‘heals’ and ‘diseases’ in the Zambian research data implies the same premise.

Words or terms are generic and versatile. They have a loose association with meaning when they are not in use. As we saw in Chapter 2, such meanings could originate from other phenomenological experiences.³⁸ These loose meanings form the basis for creative modifications for specific use.³⁹

‘Generic’ is the ‘range of possibilities’ in meaning, the common element among all known uses of a term. It does not follow however, that generic meaning has functional use in particular contexts. The nuanced form of the generic meaning will function in a particular context. This means that when we encounter a word, we attach no specific meaning to it. We only proceed within the guidance supplied by the generic meaning until we discover the appropriate nuance from the context.⁴⁰

This is supported by the ‘vast elasticity of terms’ in African epistemology,⁴¹ likely an extension to language of the holistic approach so pervasive in ontology.⁴² Lack of

³⁸ See the way the *Musoli* tree and its function in hunting spawned the generic meaning ‘to reveal’ and that is capable of multiple nuances.

³⁹ For an example of the problematic such associating causes for precision driven scholarship, see Goldingay’s contrast of the need to define terms clearly in OT Theology with the OT writers’ tendency for resonance and associations that defy specific definition. Goldingay, *Approaches*, 25.

⁴⁰ E.g. the meanings of the *Musoli* tree, Chapter 2, p. 43.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 42.

appreciation for such comprehensiveness has led some to claim that African languages evidenced grammatical and syntactical paucity.⁴³

In a recent related study of John's appropriation of Zechariah in the book of Revelation, the researcher concluded that there are no "scientific and objective criteria for discerning and determining allusions".⁴⁴ This shows that the epistemology at play does not lend itself to "scientific and objective" criteria.

When this epistemological premise is associated with larger constructions and traditions, the material is presumed to be somewhat encrypted and in need of deciphering by the hearer or reader. This is the principle behind citation by evoking. Both parties in the communication process are presumed to be privy to extensive knowledge of the material evoked thereby rendering the need for extensive and explicit referencing unnecessary.

The biblical data contains appropriations that assume such a knowledge base at the level of words,⁴⁵ phrases⁴⁶ and extended references.⁴⁷ The Zambian research data also shows such appropriations at the level of words⁴⁸ and the presumption that the Bible is composed of concise material that the revealing activity of the Holy Spirit must expand (or particularize).

Criticism about the value, desirability or even possibility of discussing 'generic' or intrinsic meanings, given that contextual use determines meaning, is well attested.⁴⁹

⁴³ Ibid., p. 43.

⁴⁴ Marko Jauhiainen, "Behold, I Am Coming: The Use of Zechariah in Revelation" (PhD, University of Cambridge, 2003), 157, 158. Specifically, he notes, "As for the problematic criteria for discerning allusions, it is proposed that the quest is at least partially misguided and should be laid to rest, for analysing allusions in Revelation is *essentially a subjective enterprise* and a matter of *reading competence* rather than following a set of 'objective' criteria." Jauhiainen, 158. Italics, mine.

⁴⁵ E.g. 'Yah' for Yahweh in Ps 77, pp. 181-182.

⁴⁶ E.g. 'Your anointed one' in reference to Israel in Hab 3, p. 208, and 'my voice to God' in Ps 77:2A₁, A₂.

⁴⁷ See the extended echoes of *Chaoskampf* in the Song at the Sea, Ps 77 and the Prayer of Habakkuk. For example, see Days commentary on the language of the Prayer on pages 204 and 207. Also, see the extensive echoes of the Song at the Sea in Ps 77, p. 182.

⁴⁸ See the way 'pigs' evokes Levitical teachings about the uncleanness of pigs for Palula, pp. 132-133. Also, see the way 'donkeys' evokes the stupidity of the species in local folklore for Charlton Phiri, p. 133.

⁴⁹ We note here for example, Nida's observation concerning the problematic of the notion of generic (or intrinsic) meanings outside actual use (Chapter 2, p. 55) and James Barr's specific argument that contextual concerns must have priority over lexical (generic or intrinsic) meanings in understanding the use of Hebrew words. Cf. p. 75.

However, the weakness of such criticism has been to disregard altogether the place of society and, in particular, epistemological framework in the generation of semantic meanings, both generic and specific. As such, it has tended to disregard the existence of meanings beyond specific and contextual ones and the importance of these meanings in generating context-specific meanings.⁵⁰

As with all circular arguments, the two senses of meaning, the generic and the particular, are dependent on each other and it is not useful to attempt to establish precedence. In addition, an understanding of generic levels of meaning makes fresh expressions possible. To dismiss consideration of generic meanings makes particular meanings exclusive entities, unrelated with other ‘sibling words and terms’ and quite incapable of spawning related words.

The respondents in the Zambian research data have facility in an epistemology that generally does not expect semantic and syntactic units to mean precisely and that can reproduce related words. This can prove to be an invaluable asset in biblical hermeneutics.

1. e. Predisposition for indirect communication

Predisposition for indirect communication is a sub-feature of concreteness and related to the last three categories above. It is also a consequence of the coherence and hierarchy of society.⁵¹ Indirectness refers to the predisposition to intimate meanings, what elsewhere we called subterranean communication, and the concomitant participation of the interlocutor in the resolution of meanings.

In the biblical data, such participation included discerning and appreciating the message of rhetorical questions and appreciating the implicit persuasion in Joshua’s speech. It also included appreciating the subtle ways in which narrative argues or establishes a case⁵² and how invoking brings other traditions and appropriations into a construction.

⁵⁰ We noted, for instance, Schleiermacher’s observation that the grasping of the unity of the whole precedes the grasping of the peculiarities of its parts. See Chapter 2, p. 55 and note 138.

⁵¹ Chapter 2, pp. 46-51, 55-58.

⁵² Examples from Joshua’s recital of history include how the use (or lack) of *wa’eqtals* of the verb ‘give’ betrays a theological interpretation of the tradition, how chronology indicates escalation of

In the *Zambian research data*, such participation includes the various ways in which the congregations relate to the question, how such features as *extended description* indicate emphasis and how amassing witnesses establishes the authority and credibility of a teaching. It includes how a personal greeting enhances the importance of a letter and how stories and fables, by virtue of the remoteness they create, are viewed as more effective tools for communicating.

In relation to coherence and hierarchy of society, such communication assumes the context of an extended and related community, the priority of safeguarding the dignity of the other⁵³ and hierarchical considerations. Indirectness makes communication a complex exercise in intimating and discerning intentions and intimations and the rationale behind it all. Such skill requires firm grounding in the prevailing epistemology and appreciation of the socio-cultural conventions at play. In a similar way to the preceding feature, the respondents' facility in this skill can prove to be a valuable resource in engaging the extensive indirect features in the biblical material.

1. f. Phenomenon of public and harmonious expression

The phenomenon of public and harmonious expression is also a sub-feature of the coherence and hierarchy of society. The twin principles of indwelling and interaction⁵⁴ noted in relation to African societies lie at its centre. Indwelling in particular often leads to harmony of perception and feeling and the merging of individual experience and expression with common experience and expression.

In the biblical data, the Song at the Sea (and dance), the public nature of Ps 77 as 'psalm' and the numerous references to the 'fathers' that establish ethnic-based and covenant-based continuity across the generations are manifestations of the principle of indwelling. There is a sense that Israel is one in physical and spiritual terms across generations. In the *Zambian research data*, the two bases for continuity, common

threat in the foes facing Israel and how extended description communicates the superiority of Jacob's inheritance in relation to Esau's.

⁵³ Chapter 2, pp. 47, 58.

⁵⁴ Chapter 2, p. 47, note 77. As noted there, 'indwelling' refers to the consciousness of being a unit within many units, of being community. 'Interaction' refers to the coherence and inter-relatedness of everything and everyone.

ontology as God's creation and shared spirituality based on common relationship with God, are manifestations of the same sense of social coherence.

Part of indwelling is consciousness that the group and the individual can be interchangeable under certain circumstances. We noted how grammatical constructions in the Song at the Sea evidence ambiguity between the clearly stated plural subject and the singular verbs and pronouns that follow. We also noted the possibility that although Ps 77 has a singular subject, its form is for public expression making it a candidate for communal appropriation by groups of like-minded and like-affected people. Likewise, ambiguity between the singular and the plural in the Song may be a consequence of harmony of perception and feelings leading to corporate expressions that can employ the singular and the plural interchangeably.

In the Zambian research data, we see the public nature of 'praise'. The principle of indwelling governs its expression. Familiarity with the principle of indwelling by Africans can provide a valuable basis for engaging the numerous instances of public expressions in the biblical material. Equally, familiarity with the principle of interaction can prove to be a valuable resource for understanding the relationships in the biblical material.

1. g. Spirituality of Creation

Spirituality of creation refers to the immanence and priority of spirit beings in the created order in general and the immanent activity of God among his people in particular. As such, it brings together all the evidence from several related categories used to analyse this feature.⁵⁵ The reality of spirit beings is presupposed, not discussed, in both sets of data. This epistemological feature merely discusses aspects of their activities in the created order.

The biblical data evidenced both implicit and explicit references to consciousness of the presence of God and other spirit beings. Implicit references included direct address aimed at God in relation to praise, lament and prayer in the Song, Ps 77 and the Prayer of Habakkuk. Thus, regardless of the fact that all these texts are

⁵⁵ These include 'coherence and spirituality of creation', 'concreteness and the people of God', 'concreteness in the unity and continuity of Scripture' and 'concreteness in the immanence of God' (including its sub-categories, 'concreteness and redemption' and 'concreteness and revelation').

monologues, their form assumes a present and attentive God. They also included the representative acts of Moses at the Sea of Reeds and his entire mediatory ministry in the Exodus narrative. Finally, they included reference to curse in warfare.

Explicit references included the dialogue between Moses and Yahweh in the Exodus narrative, the dialogue between Habakkuk and Yahweh in the first two chapters of the prophecy and Joshua's 'prophetic' speech that is, at least in form, God speaking to the people by the mouth of his servant.

The Zambian research data addresses the question of God creating as a basis for establishing common human ontology. Consciousness of his presence includes prayers to God, the Holy Spirit's role in exegesis, the pervasive anticipation of his enabling and revealing acts in the sermon event and the perception that he dwells with all the 'people of God'. Consciousness of other spirit beings includes references to the subversive activities of Satan, seducing spirits and demons among the 'people of God' and their role in the activities of witchdoctors.

There is no example of explicit *interaction* with God or other spirits in the Zambian data. However, this is likely a consequence of the limitations of the data than an indication that this community does not experience such presence and interaction.

The above confirms the profile in Chapter 2 that African and OT worldviews are spiritual and holistic, permitting no polarity between the physical and the spiritual. Further, it confirms that people exist in the company of and under the authority of spirit beings.⁵⁶ The African's spiritual and holistic worldview and his keen sensitivity to things spiritual is a resource that can generate useful insights into the spiritual nature of the biblical material and the charismatic nature of Christian faith and practice.

In this section, we have identified a premise for appropriation and six epistemological features that are common to both sets of data. These include (1) 'priority of the appropriating community', (2) 'predisposition for imagery and figurative language', (3) 'predisposition for concreteness in language', (4) 'predisposition for comprehensiveness in language', (5) 'predisposition for indirect communication', (6) 'phenomenon of public and harmonious expression' and (7) 'spirituality of creation'.

⁵⁶ See Chapter 2, pp. 41-42.

We have also suggested ways in which these features would make the ‘African’ as exemplified by the respondents in the Zambian research data, a participant in biblical hermeneutics based on his epistemological constitution. In the next and final section, we suggest how such participation can relate to the current state of method in biblical scholarship in the light of postcolonial trends.

2. African biblical hermeneutical methods and biblical scholarship

In keeping with postcolonial trends and trajectories in African biblical scholarship,⁵⁷ the epistemological foundation that we have established is postcolonial conceptual space for the respondents in the Zambian research data to engage the biblical material from their epistemological and socio-cultural realities. In the context of postmodern plurality, this must be the foundation for their biblical scholarship.

The immediate benefit of such scholarship will be to contribute towards the ongoing translatability of the message of the Scriptures for their societies. Lamin Sanneh identified the translation of the Scriptures into African vernacular languages for evangelistic purposes as the genesis of this process for Africa in spite of the presence of contrary trends in the Modern Missionary Movement. As we have noted elsewhere,⁵⁸ his claims that translatability *has already* happened in Africa are not entirely accurate in the light of glaring evidence that Enlightenment thought and Euro-centric values persist in several critical spheres of neo-colonial Africa.⁵⁹

However, our aims for attempting to delineate the African epistemological constitution and socio-cultural realities and to use them as a basis for engaging the biblical material are broader than the goal of translatability. In keeping with the now passé recognition that Africans find an epistemological and cultural familiarity with the biblical texts,⁶⁰ we intended to delineate the epistemological and socio-cultural

⁵⁷ Cf. Chapter 1, 24-27.

⁵⁸ Nyirenda, “Critical Evaluation,” 10, note 33.

⁵⁹ Kashoki, 170-173; Ukpong, “Rereading the Bible,” 4; Holter, 11; Deist, “South African Old Testament Studies,” 311-319. Cf. Page 16 above.

⁶⁰ Oduyoye and Kanyoro, 4; LeMarquand, 72; Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, 145; “Old Testament,” 141-184.

features in African societies which evidence this familiarity. Thereafter, we aim to make these features the basis for Africans to articulate biblical hermeneutical methods for each of the genres that they find epistemologically and culturally familiar.

These broader aspirations identify this research project with what Ukpong classified as *evaluative* studies, studies that seek to draw theological consequences from the encounter between African religion and culture and the Bible.⁶¹ In keeping with such studies, our intention is not to discard the historical critical method and its aspirations to interpret texts in their historical contexts in the light of literary and cultural conventions of their time. Rather, we recognise the fact that the historical critical method cannot be divorced from the epistemological constitution and socio-cultural realities of the scholars who adopt it for their work. We also recognize that the 'historical context and literary and cultural conventions' in the Scriptures include conceptual and cognitive particularities that demand to be comprehended on their own terms.⁶² Given that Enlightenment ideals still dominate biblical scholarship, it follows that the historical critical method in its current form is largely informed by these ideals and that current biblical scholarship essentially reflects Enlightenment thought.

In advocating for the fact that Africans should bring their epistemological construct and socio-cultural realities to the task of historical critical scholarship, we anticipate and welcome dialogue with scholarship based on other epistemological and cultural realities. The contribution of scholarship based on epistemological and socio-cultural realities that are similar to those in the Bible is particularly helpful because it brings insights that advance the understanding of literary and cultural conventions in the biblical material.

Our intentions also satisfy the postcolonial ideal that postcolonial scholarship has moved on to reflection that seeks to realistically evaluate and incorporate colonial influence and thought.⁶³ We live in a diverse world and the epistemological

⁶¹ Cf. p. 27.

⁶² Philip Nel draws attention to a current trend in linguistic theory, cognitive linguistics, which is beginning to recognize that linguistic expression is a reflection of concept formation. Among other things, this theory examines the way concrete domains of experience translate into abstract ideas. Nel: 9.

⁶³ Sugirtharajah, 248-249.

constitution and socio-cultural realities delineated in this limited research reflect only one set of realities among many.

Upholding the primacy of the epistemological construct and socio-cultural realities in the Scriptures in biblical interpretation does not entail adopting one set of contemporary epistemological constitution and socio-cultural realities for biblical interpretation. Indeed, given the inevitable evolution of cultures, not even contemporary Jewish epistemology and socio-cultural realities can hope to reflect those in the biblical materials precisely.⁶⁴

Rather, the challenge of upholding the priority of the realities in the Scriptures for biblical interpretation requires the contribution of both those who evidence affinities with them and those who do not. After all, it is in the plurality of approaches that we can vitiate the effects of our own myopia to the distortions of our scholarship.⁶⁵ The only condition is that all players must declare where they are coming from in terms of worldview, epistemology and socio-cultural realities. We must forever banish the notion that one can attempt scholarship from a neutral base.⁶⁶

In the light of all this, the epistemological foundation in the previous section reveals a base for Christian reflection and practice in aid of translatability in Eastern Zambia. It should also be the basis for their contribution to biblical scholarship. This epistemology is African only in the sense that those who evidence it are indigenous Africans. 'African' does not mean this foundation is unaffected by other influences.

As noted in the introduction, we do not pretend that this foundation mirrors exactly that in the biblical material for such a phenomenon is impossible. Rather, the goal was two-fold. First, it was to delineate a base for local contribution to understanding the epistemology and socio-cultural realities inherent in the Scriptures. Second, it is to delineate a foundation for facilitating the translatability of biblical faith in Zambia.

⁶⁴ As Longenecker notes, "Modern Jews find it difficult to think like ancient Jews and so to analyze the hermeneutics of Early Judaism in a manner that is both true to the ancients and understandable today. And Christians have even greater difficulty". Longenecker, xxiii.

⁶⁵ Cf. Goldingay, *Approaches*, 18.

⁶⁶ Cf. Goldingay, *Approaches*, 18; Barton, *Reading the Old Testament*, 26-28 (a methodological imperative).

We note that in the light of the pluralism of approaches in the current environment,⁶⁷ our commitment to interpret texts in their historical contexts in the light of literary and cultural conventions of their time means we regard biblical hermeneutical methods that are based on epistemological constitutions other than those evident in the Scriptures as inappropriate for the task. This includes all methods that dismiss the possibility or desirability of accessing inherent textual meanings through historical critical approaches.

The value of this research is that it has presented us with specific grounds for exploring the relationship between biblical traditions, epistemological constitution and hermeneutics in two sets of socio-cultural and historical data. The hope is that what has been said at this minute level, will inspire reflection and comparison involving broader sets of data to delineate the epistemological foundation for African biblical hermeneutical methods.

⁶⁷ Cf. p. 76.

Conclusion

Summary of Thesis

In this research project, we set out to establish through qualitative research of case studies and analysis of select intra-biblical appropriations an epistemological foundation that Africans can use to develop biblical hermeneutical methods that are both African and biblical. The project was predicated on three assumptions.

The first was that the Christian missions of the Modern Missionary Movement and colonialism in Africa were mediated through Enlightenment thought and European socio-cultural realities (chapter 2). The second was that all scholarship is conducted from an epistemological framework and socio-cultural realities. The third was that the dominant epistemological paradigm in which biblical scholarship continues to be conducted in sub-Saharan Africa is in the Enlightenment tradition.

These premises identify the problematic that this project intended to address in the light of a key presupposition in its approach, the epistemological and socio-cultural similarities between African and OT cultures. We outlined the contours of the basis for this presupposition in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 was a discussion of the parameters and methodologies employed in the analysis of the two sets of data.

Part II contains the two sets of primary research data for the thesis. Chapter 4 was a presentation in functional categories of the interpretations and voices of select respondents in Zambia. In it, we made the links between text, perceived meaning and application mostly in the words of the respondents. Chapter 5 was an epistemological evaluation of these links in the light of interviews with the respondents and the summary of the African epistemological constitution in Chapter 2. We found several common features despite the fact that the respondents represented a wide spectrum of influences such as Christian tradition and theological training.

In Chapter 6, we presented historical critical readings of four biblical texts that appropriate the Exodus event at some level. We adopted historical critical methodologies with a view to exegete these texts according to their historical circumstances and the epistemological and socio-cultural conventions governing them. However, we did so while conscious that the methods were products of

philosophical developments in Europe following the Enlightenment. In this chapter, we made links between Exodus 1-14, the presumed referent in the canon, and the appropriations and re-appropriations.

Chapter 7 was an epistemological evaluation of these appropriations and re-appropriations through careful literary, grammatical and socio-cultural analysis in the light of the brief profile of the OT epistemological construct in Chapter 2.

Part III was the second level of analysis, a comparison of the epistemologies from the two sets of data with a view to establish continuities between them. We found several common epistemological features that became the basis for articulating an African epistemological foundation for African biblical hermeneutical methods. These include (1) priority of the appropriating community, (2) predisposition for imagery and figurative language, (3) predisposition for concreteness in language, (4) predisposition for comprehensiveness in language, (5) predisposition for indirect communication, (6) phenomenon of public and harmonious expression and (7) spirituality of creation.

This foundation is African because it is derived from a constituency made up of indigenous Africans and living in Africa. It is an epistemological foundation for African biblical hermeneutical methods because it is also evident in intra-biblical appropriations and re-appropriations.

Contributions to Current Research

This thesis project contributes to current research at both scholarly and ecclesiastical levels. At the scholarly level, it establishes an African epistemological base derived from grounded research into the conceptual and hermeneutical practices of current African biblical interpreters. As such, it advances the debate on African 'subjects' in the reading process from theoretical justification in general terms to tangible material to work with. It also identifies some of the epistemological features at play in the Bible in spite of all the critical qualifications that can be made about the perceived referent traditions for the selected biblical texts. As such, it provides us with a profile of an epistemological construct that we can project to be partly responsible for intra-biblical interpretations.

In both instances, we have critically verifiable epistemological bases for articulating African and intra-biblical hermeneutical practices. The value of such articulation is twofold. First, Africans have a basis, albeit microcosmic, for exploring the relationships between their epistemological and socio-cultural constructs and their hermeneutics and homiletics. This has the effect of enhancing self-understanding for the ‘subject’ of interpretation. It is biblical hermeneutics where the interpreter wants to exercise control over and creatively use his or her worldview, epistemological construct and socio-cultural realities in the task of biblical hermeneutics.¹ Second, Africans have a basis for comparing their hermeneutics and homiletics with intra-biblical practices. This has the effect of making it possible to measure the empathetic value of readings based on African epistemology.² What the findings lack in breadth of scope, they compensate for in analytical detail.

It is important that the debate about the ‘African predilection for the Old Testament’³ move to this level because it is in the areas of epistemology and method that Africans can contribute most to biblical interpretation that seeks to uphold the priority of the circumstances and conventions in the Bible. Comparative studies within the framework of Comparative Religion have already achieved a lot by way of mitigating the negative portrayals of the African worldview and socio-cultural practices and negation of Africa’s presence in the Bible perpetuated in the Modern Missionary Movement.⁴

Similarly, the trend in *Evaluative Studies* to interpret the Bible based on the similarities between African and biblical realities needs to develop from merely legitimising the African base as a reading platform to engaging the otherness of Scripture.⁵ As noted by other African scholars, this is the next frontier for African biblical scholarship.⁶

¹ Ukpong, “Rereading the Bible,” 5-6.

² Cf. Goldingay’s argument for a stance of empathy in biblical scholarship, p. 76.

³ Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, 145.

⁴ Ukpong, “Developments in Biblical Interpretation,” 12.

⁵ Ibid., 16-17.

⁶ For an extended discussion about the need to move on to teaching Old Testament exegetical methods, introduction, history and theology from the African perspective, see Deist, “South African Old Testament Studies,” 314-320. Cf. Ukpong, “Developments in Biblical Interpretation,” 26 and Nel: 9-10.

At the ecclesiastical level, this research project should take the discussion of translatability of Christianity a step further on two fronts. First, it should greatly diminish the shame and inferiority complex associated with African ways of appropriating the biblical message in contrast with Western ways. For example, since it can be shown that reader benefit-focussed reading of the biblical traditions is at the centre of intra-biblical appropriations, Africans need not be ashamed of bypassing the elusive singular historical-critically obtained meaning of texts for spiritual meanings 'revealed' by God in the matrix involving Scripture and their spiritual, existential and epistemological and socio-cultural realities. Second, the fact that the epistemologies from the two sets of data bear close similarities should release Africans to encounter God without the inhibitions imposed by the censorious eye of those clad in a Western worldview, epistemological construct and socio-cultural realities.

Projections for Further Research

At the very least, we hope that this research project inspires further research in two areas. The first is pedagogy. Now that we have established some of the epistemological features of what it means to be African, albeit in a limited sense, and how this compares with features in the Bible, we must research into pedagogy for Africa. By this, we include official pedagogical practices in the church, largely homiletics, and such practices in the African academy, largely the development of ways of instruction informed by our new understanding of the material and practices in the Bible.

The second area of research is the development of methodologies for biblical exegesis, introductions to biblical traditions, including ways of understanding history, and doing theology. Deist's tantalizing invitation and challenge deserves extensive citation here:

What would the history of Israel have looked like had it been written with a profound knowledge of African socio-cultural traditions? What would the 'God of the Old Testament' have looked like had we not observed him through (idealist or materialist) European eyes, but through the eyes of African religions...? How would we have appraised Old Testament poetry and wisdom literature had we read it

against the backdrop of traditional African praise songs, work songs and funeral dirges? How would we have interpreted the book of Lamentations had we read it against the backdrop of South African migrant workers' songs? How would we have evaluated and interpreted Old Testament 'myths' had we not been so fascinated by Western rationalist scepticism?⁷

We suggest that the answers to these questions and several related ones are at the heart of the next frontier for African biblical scholarship.

⁷ Deist, "South African Old Testament Studies," 319.

APPENDIX I: Brief Histories of the Christian Traditions of the Respondents in Zambia

The Christian traditions of the respondents in our research lend themselves to classification according to time of establishment in Zambia and theological persuasion. The twenty-one respondents according to their church traditions are given below with the number of interviews indicated in brackets for each classification.¹ Their histories and theological traditions follow these.

Susan Kanyemba Phiri and Pastor Nkhonjera (2) belong to the Victory Bible Church. Bishop Boyd Makukula, Reverends Redson Chisenga and Simon Chikamata and Elder Khetson Mbewe (5) belong to the Pentecostal Assemblies of God, Zambia. Elder W. Palula (1) belongs to the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Rev. John Phiri and Elders Tobias Kamude Phiri, Yesaya Banda and Dickson Banda (4) belong to the Reformed Church in Zambia. Elder M. Mang'ombe Tembo and Charlton Phiri (2) belong to the Bible Gospel Church in Africa. Pastor S. L. Mbewe (2) belongs to the Apostolic Faith Church. J. Kakoma (1) belongs to the Tower of Hope Independent Church. Godwin Nkonde and student pastor David Mujumira (2) belong to the United Church of Zambia. Pastor L. Sakala (1) belongs to the Pilgrim Wesleyan Church. Elder L. Phiri (1) belongs to the Old Apostolic Church. Pastor Millar Phiri (1) belongs to an independent Baptist Church. Pastor Mackwell Nyirenda (1) belongs to the Apostolic Faith Mission.

The Reformed Church of Zambia directly owes its origins to the missionary efforts of the Dutch Reformed Church (N.G.) of the Cape synod, South Africa, itself an extension of the faith brought by Jan Van Riebeeck to the Dutch Colony at the Cape in 1652.² The Dutch Reformed Church Mission (D.R.C.M.)³ missions to Nyasaland worked primarily among the Chewa through an understanding with Livingstonia Mission. They established a station at Magwero, 12 miles northeast of Fort Jameson (Chipata), and handed it over to the Orange Free State synod.⁴ From Magwero the work of the D.R.C.M. expanded among the Ngoni⁵, the Chewa⁶ and Nsenga.⁷

¹ Note that Redson Chisenga and S. L. Mbewe were recorded on two separate occasions each. Hence, there are two more responses than the number of respondents.

² Peter Bolink, *Towards Church Union in Zambia: A Study of Missionary Co-Operation and Church-Union Efforts in Central Africa*. (Franeker: T. Wever, 1967), 80.

³ Several churches emerged beyond the Cape from this initial stock and initially coalesced into four independent but loosely related N.G. churches in South Africa before re-union in 1962. The churches undertook missions into the African mainland. Each one was called Dutch Reformed Church Mission and only distinguished from each other by further qualifications indicating such elements as the sponsoring synod in South Africa, etc. Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 87; Gann, *A History of Northern Rhodesia*, 112.

⁵ These included Madzimoyo (1903) which became the head station after 1914 following depopulation of Magwero by the formation of Native Reserves, and Fort Jameson (1905).

⁶ Nsadz (1908).

⁷ Nyanje (1905) and Hofmeyer (1914).

When several missionary organisations were consolidating their work through mergers in both Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, the D.R.C.M. in Northern Rhodesia declined largely for doctrinal reasons.⁸ Instead, in 1943, it became the Dutch Reformed Church in Northern Rhodesia and in 1957; it became the African Reformed Church, the immediate forerunner of the Reformed Church of Zambia.

Its theological orientation has always been Reformed, anchored in the Apostolic and Nicene Creeds. Curiously, Reformed Church of Zambia congregations use the Chewa language for their services throughout Zambia regardless of the languages spoken in the areas outwith the Eastern Province and Lusaka.⁹

This background is shared with BIGOCA, a breakaway movement from the Reformed Church of Zambia.¹⁰ As we will see below, Pentecostalism influenced other Christian traditions in waves that have been distinguished from each other by historians of missions. These include roughly the following. The first wave at the turn of the twentieth century, with happenings at Topeka, Kansas on 1 January 1901 often understood to be spark the movement¹¹ and give rise to several Pentecostal traditions collectively classified as 'classical Pentecostals'; the second wave traceable to the Church of the Way, Van Nuys, California in 1960, penetrating mainline Protestant and Catholic churches and resulting in what has been classified as 'neo-Pentecostal' or 'charismatic renewal' movements;¹² and the third wave, generally traceable to John Wimber's ministry at Fuller Theological Seminary in 1981, essentially among evangelicals who experienced signs and wonders but disdained labels such as 'Pentecostal' or 'charismatic,' and usually classified as the 'neo-charismatic movement.'¹³

BIGOCA started as a movement within the Reformed Church in Zambia that embraced a renewal that entailed an emphasis on evangelical teachings, particularly the teaching that salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ's atoning work and results in being 'born again,' and a Pentecostal pneumatology. Sympathisers broke away from the Reformed Church of Zambia and formed BIGOCA in 2001.¹⁴

Closely related to the history of the Reformed Church of Zambia is that of the United Church of Zambia, which is the result of a merger of several missionary organisations, working in Northern Rhodesia as Zambia was called prior to its

⁸ Essentially these doctrinal reasons were misgivings about the liberal tendencies of some missionaries in the potential union, notably Scottish Presbyterian missionaries. Bolink, 202-206, 249, 336.

⁹ This is from personal experience.

¹⁰ Times Reporter, "BIGOCA Church Project Gobbles up K210m," *Times of Zambia*, Thursday, 22 July 2004, 1.

¹¹ Vinson Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal, 1901-2001* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), 1, 3.

¹² *Ibid.*, 8-9.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁴ BIGOCA, *Bible Gospel Church* (22 July 2004, accessed 22 July 2004); available from <http://fathersheartint.org/fh/p.s/places.asp>. According to this official site, "BIGOCA is currently ministering at 42 churches in Zambia, 11 churches in Mozambique, 2 churches in Blantyre, Malawi, 1 in Namibia, and 1 in Zimbabwe. Bible Gospel Church has a membership of about 55, 000 people."

political independence on 24 October 1964. Moves towards union in Northern Rhodesia were fuelled and modelled by the Union Church on the Copperbelt, an indigenous initiative¹⁵ that was well received by missionary organisations in the area.¹⁶

There was already some co-operation among mission organisations on the Copperbelt involving The London Missionary Society, Free Church of Scotland, Plymouth Brethren and Baptists among others in what was called the United Missions in the Copperbelt (U.M.C.B.). This organisation merged in a co-operative effort with the Union Church “to create a closer bond and give more uniformity between the congregations at the separate mines” in about 1934.¹⁷ However, this did not include churches for Europeans as separate racial congregations reflected the popular thinking of the time.¹⁸

The new organisation was also called the Union Church of the Copperbelt (U.C.C.B.). Plymouth Brethren and Baptists eventually pulled out to pursue their own courses as autonomous assemblies.¹⁹ On 1 December 1945 the U.C.C.B., the L.M.S., and the Church of Scotland merged to form the Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia (C.C.A.R), roughly to parallel the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian in Nyasaland.²⁰

Soon the gathering winds of political change favoured movement towards multi-racial congregations and it is openly acknowledged that national sentiment played a decisive role in producing union in the formation of the United Church of Zambia.²¹ On 26 July 1958, the C.C.A.R., and the yet European Copperbelt Free Church Council (C.F.C.C.), united to form the United Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia (U.C.C.A.R.).²² On 16 January 1965 the U.C.C.A.R., the Methodist Church and the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society (P.E.M.S.) with its protégé, the Church of Barotseland, merged to form the United Church in Zambia.²³ The United Church of Zambia, like the Reformed Church of Zambia, is Reformed in doctrine. It also embraces both the Apostolic and Nicene Creeds.²⁴

United Church of Zambia congregations tend to adopt the languages of the areas in which they are for their services. Curiously, however, both respondents at the U.C.Z. congregation in Katete, a predominantly Chewa area, addressed the congregation in

¹⁵ Roberts, 200-201.

¹⁶ Bolink, 177-180.

¹⁷ Ibid., 180.

¹⁸ Ibid., 332.

¹⁹ Ibid., 189.

²⁰ Ibid., 253-254.

²¹ Ibid., 362.

²² Ibid., 334.

²³ Ibid., 363.

²⁴ Ibid., 390. Cf. Ross, *Blantyre Mission*, 17, 113; H. McIntosh, *Robert Laws: Servant of Africa* (The Stables, Carberry, Scotland: The Handsel Press Ltd, 1993).

Bemba, the lingua franca of the Copperbelt and Northern Provinces of Zambia, without an interpreter.

We have already alluded to the fact that Baptist missionaries were present on the Copperbelt at the time of the loose merger between the Union Church and the U.M.C.B in c.1936 and that they later disassociated themselves from this union to form independent assemblies. Several other Baptist missionary organisations from Europe and North America have since established works in Zambia. Currently, the Baptist churches in Zambia do not belong to one body.

Our respondent, Millar Phiri, came to Sinda as a church planter affiliated with a Baptist missionary organisation. Due to some differences, he has since seceded together with the churches that he planted. He continues to plant and give oversight to these Baptist congregations in the Sinda area as an independent ministry. At the time of the interview, they were in excess of 13 and spread over areas up to forty Kilometres from his base.

The Plymouth Brethren or Christian Missions in Many Lands (C.M.M.L) as they continue to be known in Zambia preceded the Baptists in leaving the Union Church to pursue self-government. Since about two decades ago, some of their churches, particularly those in North-Western and the Copperbelt Provinces of Zambia, have experienced renewal reminiscent of 'neo-Pentecostal' movements or 'charismatic renewal' movements alluded to above. This has led to the formation of a number of independent Charismatic assemblies particularly in the larger cities of the country.

Tower of Hope is one such thriving assembly in the country's capital. Its Brethren heritage is evident in such areas as church government. A group of lay elders collectively give pastoral oversight. However, in keeping with its newly found charismatic theology, public ministry is linked to attested 'gifts of the Spirit.'

We have already encountered Methodist missions in Zambia in the merger that led to the formation of the U.C.Z. Methodism came to Zambia through South Africa and in two strands, both originating from Britain: the Primitive Methodist Missions Society (P.M.M.S) and the Wesleyan Methodist Missions Society (W.M.M.S).²⁵ Unlike other missionary organisations of the time, Methodist missionary societies were Methodism organised for missions and hence reflected the doctrinal traditions of Methodism.²⁶ The P.M.M.S. committed to mission work in Africa at the Jubilee Conference of 1860.²⁷ They opened the Kafue Training Institute among what were known as the Mashukulumbwe (Ila-Tonga) in Northern Rhodesia in 1870 that was later to become a training institute for W.M.M.S and L.M.S workers.²⁸

²⁵ Bolink, 66-68.

²⁶ Ibid. Cf. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, 3 vols, vol. 1 (London: Epworth, 1921), and H. B. Kendall, *The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church*, 2 vols, vol. 1 (London: Dalton, 1906).

²⁷ H. B. Kendall, *The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church*, 2 vols, vol. 2 (London: Dalton, 1906), 487-489.

²⁸ Bolink, 68; E. G. Nightingale, ed, *The Widening Way: Northern Rhodesian Sketches* (London: Cargate Press, 1952), 39.

The Pilgrim Wesleyan Church in Zambia is a child of developments within Methodism in North America coming out of the Methodist Episcopal Church.²⁹ Its history belongs together with Pentecostal missions, at least a century into the Modern Missionary Movement. It arose out of the holiness movement in North America that predated Pentecostalism.³⁰

Several holiness and some Pentecostal groups merged in 1924 in the United States to form the Pilgrim Holiness Church. On 25 June 1968, the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church in America merged to form the Wesleyan Church, the body to which the Pilgrim Wesleyan Methodist Church in Zambia belongs.³¹ The Wesleyan Church upholds Wesleyan doctrines. Our respondent, L. Sakala, is a graduate of the Pilgrim Wesleyan Bible College in Pemba, Zambia.

The birthplace of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was Washington, New Hampshire in 1844. "Shortly after settling on a denominational name in 1860, Seventh-day Adventists began to talk about a worldwide movement."³² In an article published on 1902, Guy Dail notes that "in all of Africa there are two hundred missionary societies,"³³ making Adventist missions relatively new players in the Modern Missionary Movement.

Seventh-day Adventist missions reached the banks of the Zambezi River on the eve of 1902 with a view to establish a station at "Wankies" in Southern Rhodesia and a projection that "this will serve as a base for further work in northwestern [sic] Rhodesia."³⁴ Today the Zambia Union Mission has a membership of 420, 135 people out of a national population of 10, 896, 000 people³⁵ and the East Zambia Field 10,482 members out of a population of 1, 378, 344 people.³⁶

²⁹ *These Are the Wesleyans*, (accessed 23 July 2004); available from <http://www.wesleyan.org/who2.htm>.

³⁰ Glen O'Brien, *Lecture Eleven: The Holiness Movement and the Pilgrim Holiness Church*(Kingsley College, [n.d.], accessed 22 July 2004); available from <http://www.kingsley.vic.edu.au/glenobrien/historylecture11.htm>. Cf. Wayne E. Caldwell, ed, *Reformers and Revivalists: The History of the Wesleyan Church* (Indianapolis: Wesley Press, 1992); Paul Westphal Thomas and Paul William Thomas, *The Days of Our Pilgrimage: The History of the Pilgrim Holiness Church* (Marion: Wesley Press, 1976).

³¹ O'Brien, *Holiness Movement and the Pilgrim Holiness Church*(accessed); Lindsay Cameron, "Leadership Development in Southern Africa," *Wesleyan World*, January/February/March 2003, 4-5.

³² General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-Day Adventists - the Heritage Continues*(2004, accessed 23 July 2004); available from http://www.adventist.org/world_church/facts_and_figures/history/index.html.en.

³³ Guy Dail, "The Power of Adaptability," *The Missionary Magazine*, May 1902, 208.

³⁴ W. H. Anderson, "Opening a Mission on the Zambezi," *The Missionary Magazine*, May 1902, 216.

³⁵ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Adventist Organizational Directory: Zambia Union Mission*(General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2004, accessed 2004); available from http://www.adventistdirectory.org/view_AdmField.asp?AdmFieldID=ZAUM.

³⁶ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Adventist Organizational Directory: East Zambia Field*(General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2004, accessed 2004); available from http://www.adventistdirectory.org/view_AdmField.asp?AdmFieldID=EZAF.

Their doctrines supplement those of Protestantism with a stress on the nearness of the Second Advent and the sanctity of the Sabbath.³⁷

The Pentecostal Assemblies of God (Zambia) or P.A.O.G (Z), Apostolic Faith, Apostolic Faith Mission, Old Apostolic Church and Victory Bible Church all date back, at least in part, to the “missionary emphasis arising from the post-Azusa Street spread of the Pentecostal experience in both North America and Europe.”³⁸ The missions they gave rise to represent the second wave of missionary activities within the Modern Missionary Movement. However, they do not draw from that phenomenon proportionately.

P.A.O.G (Z) arose immediately out of Azusa Street. It historically belongs to the post Topeka, Kansas Apostolic Faith faction at Azusa Street that parted company with Parham, the leader at Topeka. In the United States, the Assemblies of God became an organisation in 1914. Generally, it brought together people from existing Christian Protestant traditions who had embraced Topeka, Kansas and Azusa Street doctrines and experiences. Pentecostals generally regard themselves as restorationists of apostolic faith particularly with respect to Pneumatology. Outside Europe, America, Australia and New Zealand, they went to all the traditional sites of missionary endeavour: Africa, India, China, Japan, Korea and the Middle East.³⁹

The P.A.O.G (Z) is a child of Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (P.A.O.C.) missions.⁴⁰ P.A.O.C. missions first established a work in Zambia in the 1950s. The P.A.O.G (Z) has grown impressively since it graduated the first class at its newly established Bible College in 1978. It is currently the largest evangelical group in Zambia. The definitive doctrines of P.A.O.G (Z) continue to be those of Protestant evangelicalism and the Pentecostal experience.⁴¹

Victory Bible Church is an arm of Victory Ministries. The histories and characteristics of both are inseparable from Dr. Nevers Mumba, the founder and president of Victory Ministries International.⁴² Mumba is a product of P.A.O.G (Z), which he left in the 1980s to found Victory Ministries as an independent evangelist. His ministry spread to include televangelism and open air crusades. When it reached neighbouring states, it added ‘International’ to its name.

Victory Bible Churches arose out of these evangelistic efforts. They are often led by graduates of Victory Bible College, a certificate awarding institution founded to train church-planters that is in the process of being upgraded to university status.

³⁷ Adventists, *Seventh-Day Adventists*(accessed).

³⁸ Stanley M. Burgess, ed, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Revised and Expanded ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2002), 3.

³⁹ Synan, 81.

⁴⁰ P.A.O.C. received its charter in 1919 and has since managed its own missionary ventures apart from the Assemblies of God (America) otherwise known as A.G. Burgess, ed, 961-962; Synan, 75.

⁴¹ Burgess, ed, 962.

⁴² *Victory Ministries International President and Founder: The Man*, (accessed 23 July 2004); available from <http://www.zambiashallbesaved.org/profile.html>.

However, some pastors, like Pastor Nkhonjera, have never had Bible college training. In a tradition that emphasizes spiritual gifts, this is not seen as a set back.

Mumba holds an Associate of Theology degree from Christ for the Nations Institute, Dallas, Texas and an honorary doctorate degree from Flint, Michigan in recognition of his efforts.⁴³ His Pentecostal heritage continues to permeate Victory Ministries International.

Apostolic Faith (A.F.) churches directly arise out of Topeka, Kansas. They have since evolved into several alliances of Apostolic Faith spreadout all over the world.⁴⁴ Pastor S. L. Mbewe in Katete is pioneering an A.F. congregation in Katete.

The founder of the Apostolic Faith Mission (A.F.M.), Florence Louise Crawford, embraced Pentecostalism at Azusa Street. From Portland, Oregon, she has built a world movement mainly because of an extensive faith publishing initiative. Her organisation continues to follow its leader is emphasizing faith living and frowning on Bible training schools.⁴⁵ Pastor Mackwell Nyirenda in Petauke continues to live 'by faith.'

Anderson has argued that what he calls 'Spirit-type churches'⁴⁶ in southern Africa originate from a fusion between the Zionism arising out of Zion City in Illinois, USA and Azusa Street Pentecostalism in movements that arose from the ministry of P. L. Le Roux in South Africa at the turn of the 20th century.⁴⁷ Le Roux, a Zionist, embraced Azusa Street Pentecostalism when he met Pentecostal missionaries in South Africa.⁴⁸

African converts in turn embraced this combination and brought African religious elements into the mix. The result has been a host of movements bearing 'Apostolic' or 'Zion,' in their names, the preferred terms by African Zionists⁴⁹ and which betray the fact that "most of them are Pentecostally inclined, or at least give pre-eminence to the work of the Holy Spirit."⁵⁰

A number of these are indigenous and independent churches with no mission connection. This reflects Pentecostalism's penchant for replication through individuals who have undergone "the powerful experience of receiving the Holy

⁴³ Ibid.(accessed).

⁴⁴ Burgess, ed, 326-327.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 327.

⁴⁶ He defines 'Spirit-type churches' as African independent churches of the prophetic type and African Pentecostal churches – some with and others without links with Western Pentecostal churches but all which share an emphasis on the inspiration and revelation of the Holy Spirit. Allan Anderson, *Moya: The Holy Spirit in an African Context* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1991), vi.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 26-27. Cf. B. G. M. Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1948), 48-49.

⁴⁸ Anderson, *Moya*, 26-27.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 28.

⁵⁰ M. L. Daneel, "Towards a Theologia Africa," *Missionalia* 12 (1984): 54.

Ghost that makes every recipient a powerful witness.”⁵¹ Moreover, even among those that have some mission connection, there has been a shift towards the development of a specifically African character leading to several parallels with independent ‘Spirit-type churches.’⁵²

The Old Apostolic Church in Katete exists in an area where there are other indigenous movements bearing the name ‘Apostolic.’ Elder L. Phiri, who is really the equivalent of a pastor, has an itinerant ministry that often takes him to sister churches in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

British rule first came under the charter of the British South Africa Company⁵³ and later, in 1924-5, under the auspices of the Colonial Office.⁵⁴ White administration under the Charter signalled radical and often coercive changes in the local societies leading to a slow disintegration of the traditional African way of life. The rate of disintegration varied from tribe to tribe and directly affects how much of the traditional forms of social life and political organisation was retained by a tribe.⁵⁵

Traditional social life and structures, including the power and authority of chiefs, were subjected to the authority of the *Boma*⁵⁶ and the influence of a cash economy.⁵⁷ The changes so imposed extended to social, ethical and ontological issues.⁵⁸

The 1914-18 war saw the forced recruitment of porters from all districts and further disruption of societies.⁵⁹ Colonial rule practiced a policy of white settlement at the expense of the displacement of Africans in keeping with an early governor’s vision

⁵¹ L. Grant McClung, Jr, ed, *Azusa Street and Beyond: Pentecostal Missions and Church Growth in the Twentieth Century* (South Plainfield, New Jersey: Bridge Publishing, Inc, 1986), 41.

⁵² Anderson, *Moya*, 3.

⁵³ Johnston, *British Central Africa*, vii; Hall, 69-71. “Johnston played a dual role as representative of the Crown and of the Charter Company although he was responsible ultimately to the Foreign Office.” Hall, 86.

⁵⁴ Hall, 71.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 96. For example, disintegration was much accelerated among the Ngoni whose political formation was shattered by British military conquest or the Lamba whose tribal areas were swamped by white settlement.

⁵⁶ This is an acronym for British Overseas Military Administration. To this day, civic administration offices are popularly referred to as ‘the Boma.’

⁵⁷ Hall, 97.

⁵⁸ “The laws so imposed were of course different, and so too was the acceptance of what was reasonable, what was to be expected, and what was not to be tolerated. Above all the tax, the most comprehensible, was yet the most revolutionary of all the new features of life instituted by new administrations. It compelled men to work when they might have hunted, to travel far while they might have stayed at home; by it they acknowledged a new authority, higher than the chief; and by it they became equal with men of all tribes. Ngoni and Tonga, Bemba and Lovale, Ndebele and Shona, all were compelled to submit to this common obligation that placed all men, high and low, weak and strong, in a common predicament.” Wills, 226.

⁵⁹ “It has been estimated that for a large part of the war, one third of the adult African males in the country were impressed to take food and equipment to the front. Women were also employed. The Carriers suffered terribly from disease, and an unknown number – at least several thousand – succumbed.” Hall, 102.

that Northern Rhodesia should be developed as 'white man's country' in order to "strengthen the links between southern Africa and the much smaller communities of white settlers in British East Africa."⁶⁰

Prime land was identified for this purpose and designated Crown land. Reserves were also demarcated for the forced habitation of Africans. These included Fort Jameson in the east (Chipata), Abercorn in the north (Mbala) and along the railway line. Under this policy, about 60,000 Africans were moved into reserves.⁶¹

In spite of (or even because of) the oppressive authority and impact of British rule, currents of indigenous dissent flourished. The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, a union of British territories in Central Africa with African participation on terms set by the British and white settlers in Southern Rhodesia, was established on the 3rd August 1953.⁶² Resting as it did on the support of a dominant white minority,⁶³ it did not satisfy the drive towards independence. Northern Rhodesia officially became Zambia, an independent state, on 24 October 1964.⁶⁴ However, this was fundamentally independence *from* white political rule, not a reversion *to* pre-colonial states⁶⁵ or more critically for our research, white domination in other spheres of thought and life.

Political independence was the beginning of new struggles collectively characterised as struggles from white domination. For the young Zambia, the immediate struggle was for economic independence.⁶⁶ Struggles for freedom from philosophical and cultural domination were soon to follow.

⁶⁰ Roberts, 183.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Wills, 251-256.

⁶³ Ibid., 265.

⁶⁴ Roberts, 222.

⁶⁵ "Could never have developed in his absence" is quite presumptuous. But Hanna's observation still has a ring of truth to it: "Africans had no wish to revert to tribalism, much as they might long to be able to take pride in their pre-colonial past. The presence of the white man had awakened a consciousness which could never have developed in his absence. Members of tribes which had formerly hated and harried each other came to realise that they had blackness in common, and that they were equally subject to the power and arrogance of people who, by contrast, were not black. Hence, in Africa, nationalism and Pan-Africanism are inseparable, and are almost names for the same phenomenon." A. J. Hanna, *The Story of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), 270.

⁶⁶ Roberts, 224.

APPENDIX II: Profiles of the Respondents

In Appendix II, we give brief profiles of the respondents. The dates when they gave the homilies are indicated in brackets immediately following the names of the respondents. Where two or more people belong to the same Christian tradition their profiles are given concurrently, otherwise the profiles follow the order in which the homilies were recorded. The personal information of the respondents is kept to the barest minimum and only includes information that contributes towards an understanding of their cultural profiles and possible foreign influences upon their epistemological constitution.

We also supply a compact disc of the transcripts of their sermons and related interviews in the languages that they were given. This is to facilitate independent corroboration of our analysis and conclusions.

Susan Kanyemba Phiri (22 June 2003) is a cotton buyer with one of two cotton companies operating in Katete. She is also part of the leadership of the local Victory Bible Church. She is in her mid forties, belongs to the local Chewa tribe and lacks formal theological training. She gave the homily as part of the proceedings on 'Women's Sunday,' a day when the women of the church lead all aspects of the Sunday church service.

Nkhonjera (3 August 2003) is the pastor of Victory Bible Church, Katete. He belongs to the Tumbuka tribe (found in Lundazi district of the Eastern Province and in neighbouring northern Malawi). However, he has grown up on the Copperbelt Province where Bemba is the *lingua franca*. He is in his early to mid thirties and has not had formal theological training. His ministry, in keeping with the vision of the founder of Victory Ministries, is rooted in a sense of calling from God and the gifts and leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Rev. Redson Chisenga (22 June 2003 and 18 August 2003) is the pastor for Burning Bush Assembly of God in Katete, a congregation of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God (Zambia).⁶⁷ He is also a member of the Eastern Province District Executive. He is in his mid forties and holds a theological college diploma from a leading and accredited local inter-denominational evangelical college. He belongs to the Bisa tribe (Mpika district, Northern Province) but has vast experience living among different ethnic groups in Zambia. He served as a Baptist missionary within Zambia before seeking accreditation with PAOG (Z).

W. Palula (28 June 2003) is an elder with Katete Seventh Day Adventist Church. He is a retiree and a grandparent. He has no formal theological college training. He has resided in the area for a very long time and has given and continues to give teaching leadership to his congregation. He belongs to the local Chewa tribe.

⁶⁷ PAOG(Z).

Rev. Simon Chikamata (29 June 2003) is the pastor of a PAOG (Z) congregation in Chipata district and a member of the Eastern Province District Executive.⁶⁸ He is in his late forties, possibly fifties and holds a college certificate from the local PAOG (Z) College. He is a senior minister with several years experience in the churches of the Assemblies of God (Zambia). He belongs to the Kunda tribe of the Luangwa Valley in the Eastern Province of Zambia.

Tobias Kamude Phiri (6 July 2003) is an elder at the Katete Boma congregation of the Reformed Church in Zambia. He is in his fifties and works at the local electricity company offices. He has vast experience in the Reformed Church and is often called upon to give the homily. He has no formal theological training. He belongs to the local Chewa tribe.

Yesaya Banda (7 September 2003) is a local businessperson and elder in the Reformed Church of Zambia, Katete Boma congregation. He is in his thirties or early forties. He has had no formal theological training. He belongs to the local Chewa tribe.

M. Mang'ombe Tembo (12 July 2003) is an elder at Bible Gospel Church of Central Africa (BIGOCA), Katete, a recent breakaway from the Reformed Church in Zambia for doctrinal reasons. He is a Physical Education teacher at the local High School. He is in his thirties. He has no formal theological training but is a vital member of his congregation's teaching ministry. He belongs to the Ngoni tribe (Chipata).

S. L. Mbewe (14 July 2003 and 31 August 2003) is the pioneering pastor of Channel of Blessings, a congregation of the Apostolic Faith Church, in Katete. He works to support himself and his family as the congregation is still too small to support him. He is in his late forties or early fifties. He has had formal theological training. He probably belongs to the local Chewa tribe (as his surname suggests) but has grown up on the Copperbelt Province (the most urbanised province in Zambia) and still struggles to communicate in the local Chewa language.

J. Kakoma (20 July 2003) is one of the leaders at Tower of Hope, Lusaka, an independent charismatic church. He is highly esteemed as a servant of God by his congregation. He is in his late thirties or early forties and works with the University of Zambia. He has had no theological training. His surname suggests that he comes from one of the tribes in the North-western Province of Zambia.

Godwin Nkhonde (20 July 2003) is a trainee secondary school teacher who is undertaking his practical training at Katete Secondary School. He is originally from Kitwe on the Copperbelt Province where he is a lay leader in a United Church of Zambia (UCZ). The UCZ congregation in Katete gave him a platform as a visiting brother within the tradition. He is in his late twenties or early thirties. He has had no formal theological training. He belongs to the Bemba tribe.

L. Sakala (28 July 2003) is the pastor of the Pilgrim Wesleyan Church in Katete, a small pioneer work supported by foreign funding. He is in his late twenties or early

⁶⁸ He delivered the homily in Nyanje, Petauke District, as part of the proceedings conducted by the Eastern Province District Executive to dedicate the building of Nyanje Assembly and install Pastor Tembo at the congregation.

thirties. He holds a diploma in theology from the local Pilgrim Wesleyan seminary and is in Katete on a church planting mission. He belongs to the local Chewa tribe.

L. Phiri (3 August 2003) is one of the ruling elders at the Katete Old Apostolic Church. He is an elderly man possibly in his fifties, and works at the local airstrip. He is a fully ordained minister within the Old Apostolic Church tradition. He has had no formal theological training (which is not a recognised criterion for ministry in this tradition anyway). He belongs to the local Chewa tribe.

David M'jumira (10 August 2003) is a final year student-pastor at the local United Church of Zambia theological college. He is currently in Katete under the supervision of the local pastor as part of his college training requirements. He is in his late twenties or early thirties. He belongs to the Tumbuka tribe. However, his upbringing has been on the Copperbelt. He could only minister to this congregation in Bemba, the language of his upbringing on the Copperbelt Province.

Millar Phiri (10 August 2003) is an ordained minister within the tradition of the Baptist churches. He holds a certificate in theology from a local Baptist college. He has planted several churches in the Sinda area, which he visits regularly as the overseer. He is also the resident pastor of a Baptist congregation at Sinda.⁶⁹ He is possibly in his fifties and a minister of immense experience. He belongs to the local Chewa tribe.

Khetson Mbewe (17 August 2003) is the lay Pastor of Umodzi Assembly, Chipata. He is a retired civil servant and in his fifties or early sixties. He has attended and continues to attend Residential Bible School, basic theological training organised by the Eastern Province District Executive of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God (Zambia).⁷⁰ He belongs to the local Chewa tribe.

Bishop Boyd Makukula (17 August 2003) is the overseer of the Eastern District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God (Zambia) and pastor of Trinity Temple, Chipata. He holds a certificate in theology and had vast experience as a lay church leader on the Copperbelt while working in the building industry and before becoming a pastor. He is in his late forties or fifties. He belongs to the local Ngoni tribe.

Dickson Banda (24 August 2003) is a retired civil servant and an elder at the Reformed Church of Zambia, Katete Stores congregation. He is in his late fifties or sixties. He has had no formal theological training. He belongs to the local Chewa tribe.

Rev. John Phiri (24 August 2003) is the pastor of the Reformed Church in Zambia, Chipata congregation. He is currently working on a Masters degree in theology with a university in South Africa and has some experience as a pastor. He is in his thirties and a member of the local Chewa tribe.

Charlton Phiri (24 August 2003) is a technical officer with the ministry of Agriculture in Chipata. He is also a lay leader at BIGOCA, Chipata congregation,

⁶⁹ Sinda has several splinter Baptist congregations that are not a part of Phiri's churches.

⁷⁰ This district annually holds a three weeks long Residential Bible School to facilitate the training of lay leaders who are in charge of congregations in the province but have never attended formal theological training.

and a celebrated expositor of Scripture in the Chipata area. On this occasion, he was the guest speaker at the Chipata Pilgrim Wesleyan Church congregation. He is in his late thirties and has had no formal theological training. He belongs to the Nsenga tribe and comes from Nyimba district within the Eastern Province.

Mackwell Nyirenda (21 September 2003) is the pastor of the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) Church in Petauke. He has had basic formal theological training at a local AFM college. He is in his fifties and belongs to the Tumbuka tribe of Lundazi district.

APPENDIX III: Discourse Analysis of Exodus 1-14

Chapter 1

- 1:1a וַאֲלֵה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
b הַבָּאִים מִצְרָיִמָּה אֶת יַעֲקֹב
c אִישׁ וּבֵיתוֹ בָּאוּ:
2 רְאוּבֵן שָׁמְעוֹן לֵוִי וַיהוּדָה:
3 יִשָּׁשְׁכָר זְבֻלֹן וּבִנְיָמִן:
4 דָּן וְנַפְתָּלִי גָד וְאָשֶׁר:
5a וַיְהִי כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ יִצְאֵי יִרְדְּנָה יַעֲקֹב שְׁבַעִים נֶפֶשׁ
b וַיּוֹסֶף הָיָה בְּמִצְרָיִם:
6a וַיָּמָת יוֹסֵף
b וְכָל־אָחִיו
c וְכָל הַדּוֹר הַהוּא:
7a וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּרוּ
b וַיִּשְׁרְצוּ
c וַיִּרְבּוּ
d וַיַּעֲצֻמוּ בְּמֶאֱדָר מְאֹד
e וַתִּמְלֵא הָאָרֶץ אֹתָם: הַ
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- 8a וַיָּקָם מֶלֶךְ־חֹדֶשׁ עַל־מִצְרָיִם
b אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַע אֶת־יוֹסֵף:
9a וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־עַמּוֹ
b הִנֵּה עַם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
c רַב וְעָצוּם מִמֶּנִּי:
10a הִבָּה נִתְחַכְמָה לוֹ
b פְּוִי־רָבָה
c כִּי־תִחְקְרָנָה מִלְחָמָה
d וְהָיָה
e וְנוֹסֶף
f גַּם־הוּא
g עַל־שְׂנְאֵינוּ
h וְנִלְחַם־בָּנוּ
i וְעָלָה מִן־הָאָרֶץ:
11a וַיִּשְׁיֹמוּ עָלָיו שְׂרֵי מִסִּים
b לְמַעַן עֲנֹתוֹ בְּסִבְלָתָם
c וַיִּכְּנֻ עָרֵי מִסְכְּנוֹת לַפָּרֶעֶה
d אֶת־פַּחַם וְאֶת־רַעַמְסֵס:
12a וְכַאֲשֶׁר יַעֲנוּ אֹתוֹ
b כֵּן יִרְבֶּה וְכֵן יִפְרֹץ
c וַיִּקְצֹ מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
13 וַיַּעֲבִדוּ מִצְרָיִם אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּפָרֹךְ:
14a וַיִּמְרְרוּ אֶת־חַיֵּיהֶם בַּעֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה
b בַּחֲמֹר וּבִלְבָנִים וּבְכָל־עֲבֹדָה בַּשָּׂדֶה
c אֶת כָּל־עֲבֹדָתָם אֲשֶׁר־עָבְדוּ בָהֶם בְּפָרֹךְ:

Chapter 1/2

15a וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם לַמְּיֻלָּדֹת הָעִבְרִיֹת

b אֲשֶׁר שֵׁם הָאֶחָת שִׁפְרָה וְשֵׁם הַשֵּׁנִית פּוּעָה:

16a וַיֹּאמֶר

b בְּיֻלְדָּכֶן אֶת־הָעִבְרִיֹת

c וַרְאִיתֶן עַל־הָאֲבָנִים

d אֲסִבֶּן הוּא

e וְהִמָּתֵן אֹתוֹ

f וְאֲסִבַּת הִיא וְחַיָּה:

17a וַתִּירָאֵן הַמְּיֻלָּדֹת אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים

a וְלֹא עָשׂוּ

b כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהֵן מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם

c וַתַּחֲתִיֵּן אֶת־הַיֻּלְדִּים:

18a וַיִּקְרָא מֶלֶךְ־מִצְרַיִם לַמְּיֻלָּדֹת

b וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶן

c מִדּוּעַ עָשִׂיתֶן הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה

d וַתַּחֲתִיֵּן אֶת־הַיֻּלְדִּים:

19a וַתֹּאמְרֶן הַמְּיֻלָּדֹת אֶל־פְּרֻעָה

b כִּי לֹא כְנָשִׁים הַמִּצְרִיֹת הָעִבְרִיֹת

c כִּי־חַיֹּת הֵנָּה

d בְּטָרֶם תָּבוֹא אֱלֹהֵן הַמְּיֻלָּדֹת וַיֻּלְדּוּ:

20a וַיִּיטָב אֱלֹהִים לַמְּיֻלָּדֹת

b וַיִּרְכַּב הָעָם

c וַיַּעֲצֻמוּ מְאֹד:

21a וַיְהִי כִּי־רָאוּ הַמְּיֻלָּדֹת אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים

b וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם בָּתִּים:

22a וַיֵּצֵא פְרֻעָה לְכָל־עַמּוּ לֵאמֹר

b קָל־הֵבֶן הַיָּלֹד

c הַיָּאֲרָה תִשְׁלִיכֶהוּ

d וְכָל־חַבַּת תַּחֲיִיךְ: ס

2:1a וַיֵּלֶךְ אִישׁ מִבֵּית לֹוִי

b וַיִּקַּח אֶת־בַּת־לֹוִי:

2a וַתֵּהָרֶה הָאִשָּׁה

b וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן

c וַתִּקְרָא אֹתוֹ כִּרְטוּב הוּא

d וַתִּצְפְּנֶהוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה יָרָחִים:

3a וְלֹא־יָקֻלָּה עוֹד הַצִּפְיָנוּ

b וַתִּקְחֵה־לוֹ חֲבַת נָמָא

c וַתַּחֲמֹקֶהּ בַּחֲמֹר וּבְזָפֶת

d וַתִּשֶׂם בָּהּ אֶת־הַיָּלֹד

e וַתִּשֶׂם בְּסוּף עַל־שִׁפְתֵי הַיָּאֵר:

4a וַתַּעֲצֵב אַחֲתוֹ מִרְחֹק

b לְדַעַה מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה לוֹ:

5a וַתִּחַד בַּת־פְּרֻעָה לְרַחֵץ עַל־הַיָּאֵר

Chapter 2

b וְנִעְרָתֶיהָ הָלַכְתָּ עִלְיָד הַיָּאָר

c וְחָרָא אֶת־הַתְּבָה בְּחוּךְ הַסּוּף

d וְחָשְׁלָח אֶת־אֲמָתָהּ וַתִּקְחָהּ:

6a וַתִּפְתַּח

b וַתִּרְאֶהוּ אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד

c וְהָנִיחַ נָעַר בְּכֶה

d וַתַּחמֹל עָלָיו

e וַתֹּאמֶר

f מִי־לִדִּי הָעֶבְרִים זֶה:

7a וַתֹּאמֶר אַחֲתָו אֶל־בַּת־פְּרַעֲה

b הַאֲלֹךְ וְקִרְאֹתִי לָךְ אִשָּׁה מִיִּנְקָת מֶן הָעֶבְרִיִּית

c וַתִּינֶק לָךְ אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד:

8a וַתֹּאמֶר־לָהּ בַּת־פְּרַעֲה

b לִכִּי

c וַתִּלָּךְ הָעֹלָמָה

d וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־אִם הַיֶּלֶד:

9a וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ בַּת־פְּרַעֲה

b הַיִּלְכִּי אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד הַזֶּה

c וְהִינֵקְהוּ לִי

d וְאֲנִי אֶתֶּן אֶת־שְׂכָרְךָ

e וַתִּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה הַיֶּלֶד

f וַתִּנְיָקְהוּ:

10a וַיִּגְדַּל הַיֶּלֶד

b וַתִּבְאֶהוּ לְבַת־פְּרַעֲה

c אִי־הָיָה לָהּ לְבָן

d וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ מֹשֶׁה

e וַתֹּאמֶר

f כִּי מִן־הַמִּיִּם מִשִּׁיתָהוּ:

11a וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הָהֵם

b בַּיִּגְדַּל מֹשֶׁה

c וַיֵּצֵא אֶל־אֶחָיו

d וַיִּירָא בְּסִבְלָתָם

e וַיִּירָא אִישׁ מִצָּרִי

f מִכֶּה אִישׁ־עֶבְרִי מֵאֶחָיו:

12a וַיִּפֶּן כֹּה וְכֹה

b בַּיִּירָא כִּי אֵין אִישׁ

c אֶת־הַמִּצְרִי

d וַיִּשְׁמְנֶהוּ בַּחוּל:

13a וַיֵּצֵא בַיּוֹם הַשֵּׁנִי

b וְהָיָה שְׁנֵי־אֲנָשִׁים עֶבְרִים נָצִים

c וַיֹּאמֶר לָרָשָׁע

d לָמָּה תִּכֶּה רַעְדִּי:

14a וַיֹּאמֶר

b מִי שָׂמֹךְ לְאִישׁ שֶׁר וְשָׂפֹט עָלֵינוּ

Chapter 2

- c הִלְהִרְנִי אֶתָּה אָמַר
d כִּאֲשֶׁר הִרְגִּית אֶת־הַמִּצְרִי
e וַיִּירָא מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר
f אָכֵן נִדְרַע הַדָּבָר:
15a וַיִּשְׁמַע פֶּרַעַה אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה
b וַיִּבְקֹשׁ לַהֲרֹג אֶת־מֹשֶׁה
c וַיִּבְרַח מֹשֶׁה מִפָּנָיו פֶּרַעַה
d וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאֶרֶץ־מִדְיָן
e וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל־הַבְּאֵר:
16a וַלִּכְהֵן מִדְיָן שֶׁבַע בָּנוֹת
b וַתִּבְאֵנָה וַתְּדַלְּנָה
c וַתִּמְלֹאנָה אֶת־הָרְהָטִים
d לְהַשְׁקוֹת צֹאן אֲבִיהֶן:
17a וַיָּבֹאוּ הָרָעִים
b וַיִּנָּרְשׁוּם
c וַיִּקָּם מֹשֶׁה
d וַיּוֹשֶׁעֵן
e וַיִּשָּׁק אֶת־צֹאנָם:
18a וַתִּבְאֵנָה אֶל־רַעֲוָאל אֲבִיהֶן
b וַיֹּאמֶר
c מִדּוּעַ מִהֲרַתָּן בָּא הַיּוֹם:
19a וַתֹּאמְרֶן
b אִישׁ מִצְרִי הִצִּילָנוּ מִיַּד הָרָעִים
c וְנִסְתַּלֵּה דָלָה לָנוּ
d וַיִּשָּׁק אֶת־הַצֹּאן:
20a וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־בְּנָתָיו
b וַאֲיוֹ
c לָמָּה זֶה עֲזַבְתֶּן אֶת־הָאִישׁ
d קָרָאן לוֹ וַיֹּאכֵל לֶחֶם:
21a וַיּוֹאֵל מֹשֶׁה לְשִׁבְתָּ אֶת־הָאִישׁ
b וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־צִפְרָה בְּתוּלָמֹשֶׁה:
22a וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן
b וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ גֵּרְשֹׁם
c כִּי אָמַר
גֵּר הָיִיתִי בְּאֶרֶץ נֹכְרִיָּה: הֵן

- 23a וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הָרַבִּים הָהֵם
b וַיָּמָת מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם
c וַיִּאָּנְחוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן־הָעֲבָדָה
d וַיִּזְעַקוּ
e וַתַּעַל שׁוֹעֲתָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים מִן־הָעֲבָדָה:
24a וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַאֲקָתָם
b וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּרִיתוֹ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם אֶת־יִצְחָק וְאֶת־יַעֲקֹב:
25a וַיֹּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
b וַיִּדַּע אֱלֹהִים: הֵן

Chapter 3

- 3:1a וּמֹשֶׁה הָיָה רֹעֵה אֶת־צֹאן יִתְרוֹ חֹתֶנּוּ כֵּהֵן מִדִּין
b וַיִּהְיֶה אֶת־הַצֹּאן אַחֵר הַמִּדְבָּר
c וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הַר הָאֱלֹהִים חֲרָבָה:
2a וַיֵּרָא מִלֶּאךָ יְהוָה אֵלָיו בְּלִבְת־אֵשׁ מִתּוֹךְ הַסִּנֵּה
b וַיֵּרָא
c וַיְהִי הַסִּנֵּה בַעַר בָּאֵשׁ
d וַיְהִי הַסִּנֵּה אֵינָנו אֵכָל:
3a וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה
b אֲסַרְה־נָּא וְאֶרְאֶה וְאֶת־הַמִּרְאָה הַגָּדֹל הַזֶּה
c מִדּוּעַ לֹא־יָבֹעַר הַסִּנֵּה:
4a וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה כִּי סָר לִרְאוֹת
b וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו אֱלֹהִים מִתּוֹךְ הַסִּנֵּה
c וַיֹּאמֶר
d מֹשֶׁה מֹשֶׁה
e וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִנִי:
5a וַיֹּאמֶר
b אֶל־תִּקְרַב הָלֵם
c שֶׁל־נִעְלִיד מַעַל הַגִּלְיָד
d כִּי הַמָּקוֹם
e אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עוֹמֵד עָלָיו
f אֲדִמַּת־קָדֶשׁ הוּא:
6a וַיֹּאמֶר
b אֲנֹכִי אֱלֹהֵי אַבְיָד
c אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב
d וַיִּסְתַּח מֹשֶׁה פָּנָיו
e כִּי יָרָא מִהִבִּישׁ אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים:
7a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
b רָא הָרָאִיתִי אֶת־עֲנִי עַמִּי אֲשֶׁר בְּמִצְרַיִם
c וְאֶת־צַעֲקָתָם שְׁמַעְתִּי מִפְּנֵי נַשְׂיוֹ
d כִּי יָדַעְתִּי אֶת־מִכְאֲבוֹי:
8a וְאֶרְדּוּ לְהַצִּילוֹ מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם
b וּלְהַעֲלֹתוֹ מִן־הָאֶרֶץ הַהִוא
c אֶל־אֶרֶץ טוֹבָה וְרַחֲבָה
d אֶל־מָקוֹם הַכְּנָעִנִי וְהַחִתִּי
e וְהָאֱמֹרִי וְהַפְּרָזִי וְהַחִוִּי וְהַיְבוֹסִי:
9a וְעַתָּה
b הִנֵּה צִעֲקַת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּאָה אֵלַי
c וְגַם־רָאִיתִי אֶת־הַלֶּחֶץ
d אֲשֶׁר מִצְרַיִם לֹחֲצִים אֹתָם:
10a וְעַתָּה לֵךְ
b וְאַשְׁלַחְךָ אֶל־פְּרַעְה
c וְהוֹצֵא אֶת־עַמִּי בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם:
11a וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים
b מִי אֲנֹכִי כִי אֵלֶךְ אֶל־פְּרַעְה

Chapter 3

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| וְכִי אוֹצִיא אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם: | c |
| וַיֹּאמֶר | 12a |
| כִּי־אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ | b |
| וְזוֹה־לְךָ הָאוֹת כִּי אֲנִכִּי שְׁלַחְתִּיךָ | c |
| בְּהוֹצִיאֲךָ אֶת־הָעָם מִמִּצְרַיִם | d |
| תַּעֲבֹדוּן אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים עַל הָהָר הַזֶּה: | e |
| וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים | 13a |
| הִנֵּה אֲנִכִּי בָא אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל | b |
| וְאָמַרְתִּי לָהֶם | c |
| אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֵיכֶם | d |
| וְאָמְרוּ־לִי | e |
| מַה־שְּׁמוֹ | f |
| מָה אֹמַר אֲלֵהֶם: | g |
| וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה | 14a |
| אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה | b |
| וַיֹּאמֶר | c |
| כֹּה תֹאמַר לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל | d |
| אֶהְיֶה שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֵיכֶם: | e |
| וַיֹּאמֶר עוֹד אֱלֹהִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה | 15a |
| כֹּה־תֹאמַר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל | b |
| יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם | c |
| אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵיכֶם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֵיכֶם | d |
| זֶה־שְּׁמִי לְעַלְמָם | e |
| וְזֶה זִכְרִי לְדֹר דֹּר: | f |
| לֵךְ וְאֶסַּפְתָּ אֶת־זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל | 16a |
| וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם | b |
| יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם נִרְאָה אֵלַי | c |
| אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵיכֶם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב לֵאמֹר | d |
| פָּקֹד פָּקַדְתִּי אֶתְכֶם | e |
| וְאֶת־הַעֲשׂוֹי לָכֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם: | f |
| וַיֹּאמֶר | 17a |
| אֲעֲלֶה אֶתְכֶם מִעֵנִי מִצְרַיִם | b |
| אֶל־אֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַחִתִּי וְהָאֱמֹרִי וְהַכְּנִזִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי | c |
| אֶל־אֶרֶץ זְבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ: | d |
| וְשָׁמְעוּ לְקֹלְךָ | 18a |
| וּבָאתָ אִתָּהּ וְזִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם | b |
| וְאָמַרְתָּם אֵלָיו | c |
| יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הָעִבְרִיִּים נִקְרָה עָלֵינוּ | d |
| וְעַתָּה | e |
| נִלְכְּדָה־נָא הָרֹדף שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים בַּמִּדְבָּר | f |
| וְנִזְבַּחְהָ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ: | g |
| וְאָנִי יָדַעְתִּי | 19a |
| כִּי לֹא־יִתֵּן אֶתְכֶם מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם לְהַלְךְ | b |
| וְלֹא | c |

Chapter 3/4

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| בְּיָד חֲזָקָה: | d |
| וְשָׁלַחְתִּי אֶת־יָדִי | 20a |
| וְהִפֵּיתִי אֶת־מִצְרַיִם | b |
| בְּכָל נִפְלְאוֹתַי | c |
| אֲשֶׁר אַעֲשֶׂה בְּקִרְבּוֹ | d |
| וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן יִשְׁלַח אֶתְכֶם: | e |
| וְנִתַּתִּי אֶת־חֵן הַעֲסִיָּה בְּעֵינֵי מִצְרַיִם | 21a |
| וְהָיָה כִּי תֵלְכוּן | b |
| לֹא תֵלְכוּ רִיקָם: | c |
| וְשָׂאֲלָה אִשָּׁה מִשְׁכָּנְתָּהּ וּמִנֶּחֱתָ בֵּיתָהּ | 22a |
| כָּל־כֶּסֶף וְכָל־זָהָב וְשִׁמְלֹת | b |
| וְשִׁמְתֶם עַל־בְּנֵיכֶם וְעַל־בְּנוֹתֵיכֶם | c |
| וְנִצַּלְתֶּם אֶת־מִצְרַיִם: | d |
| 4:1a וַיַּעַן מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר | |
| וְהֵן | b |
| לֹא־יֵאֱמִינוּ לִי | c |
| וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ בְּקִלִּי | d |
| כִּי יֹאמְרוּ | e |
| לֹא־נִרְאָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ יְהוָה: | f |
| 2a וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יְהוָה | |
| (מִזֶּה) [מִתְּהִי] בְּיָדְךָ | b |
| וַיֹּאמֶר | c |
| מִטָּה: | d |
| 3a וַיֹּאמֶר | |
| הַשְּׁלִיכוּהוּ אֶרְצָה | b |
| וַיִּשְׁלִיכוּהוּ אֶרְצָה | c |
| וַיִּהְיֶה לְנֶחֱשׁ | d |
| וַיִּנָּס מֹשֶׁה מִפָּנָיו: | e |
| 4a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה | |
| שְׁלַח יָדְךָ | b |
| וְאַחֲזוּ בַּזְנֻבוֹ | c |
| וַיִּשְׁלַח יָדוֹ | d |
| וַיִּחַזַּק בּוֹ | e |
| וַיִּהְיֶה לְמִטָּה בְּכַפּוֹ: | f |
| 5a לְמַעַן יֵאֱמִינוּ | |
| כִּי־נִרְאָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתָם | b |
| אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹרָהֶם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב: | c |
| 6a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לוֹ עוֹד | |
| תִּבְאֶנָּה יָדְךָ בְּחִיקְךָ | b |
| וַיִּבְאֶנָּה יָדוֹ בְּחִיקוֹ | c |
| וַיִּצָּאֶה | d |
| וְהָיָה יָדוֹ מִצִּרְעַת כְּשִׁלְנִי: | e |
| 7a וַיֹּאמֶר | |
| הִשָּׁב יָדְךָ אֶל־חִיקְךָ | b |

Chapter 4

- c וַיָּשֶׁב יְרוֹ אֶל־חִיקוֹ
d וַיּוֹצֵאָהּ מִחִיקוֹ
e וַהֲנִה־שָׁבָה כְּבָשָׂרוֹ:
8a וְהָיָה
b אִם־לֹא יֵאֱמִינוּ לָךְ
c וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ לְקֹל הָאֵת הָרִאשׁוֹן
d וְהֵאֱמִינוּ לְקֹל הָאֵת הָאַחֲרוֹן:
9a וְהָיָה
b אִם־לֹא יֵאֱמִינוּ גַם לְשֵׁנֵי הָאֲחֻזּוֹת הָאֵלֶּה
c וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּן לְקֹלְךָ
d וְלִקְחֹת מִמִּימֵי הַיָּאֵר
e וְשִׁפְכֶת הַיִּבְשָׁה
f וְהָיוּ הַפְּמִים אֲשֶׁר תִּקַּח מִן־הַיָּאֵר
g וְהָיוּ לְדָם בַּיִּבְשָׁתָּ:
10a וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה
b בִּי אֲדֹנָי
c לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים אֲנִכִּי
d גַּם מִתְמוּל גַּם מִשְׁלֹשׁ
e גַּם מֵאִזְ דְּבָרְךָ אֶל־עֲבָדֶיךָ
f כִּי כִבְד־פָּה
g וּכְבֹד לְשׁוֹן אֲנִכִּי:
11a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָיו
b מִי שֶׁם פֹּה לְאָדָם
c אוֹ מִי־שׁוֹם אֵלֶם
d אוֹ חֶרֶשׁ
e אוֹ פֶקַח
f אוֹ עוֹר
g הֲלֹא אֲנִכִּי יְהוָה:
12a וְעָתָה
b לָךְ
c וְאֲנִכִּי אֶהְיֶה עִם־פִּיךָ
d וְהוֹרִיתִיךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּדְבֹּר:
13a וַיֹּאמֶר
b בִּי אֲדֹנָי
c שְׁלַח־נָא בְיָד־תְּשֻׁלָּח:
14a וַיַּחֲרֹאֲף יְהוָה בְּמֹשֶׁה
b וַיֹּאמֶר
c הֲלֹא אֶהְיֶן אִחִיךָ מֵלֹוֹ
d יִדְעָתִי כִּי־דִבַּר יִדְבַּר הוּא
e וְגַם תִּנְה־הוּא יֵצֵא לְקִרְאָתְךָ
f וְרָאֶךָ וְשָׁמַח בְּלִבּוֹ:
15a וְדִבַּרְתָּ אֵלָיו
b וְשָׁמַת אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים בְּפִיו
c וְאֲנִכִּי

Chapter 4

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| d | אֵלֶּיָּה עִם־פִּיד וְעִם־פִּיהוּ |
| e | וְהוֹרִיתִי אֶתְכֶם |
| f | אֶת אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּן: |
| 16a | וְדַבַּר־הוּא לָךְ אֶל־הָעָם |
| b | וְהָיָה הוּא יִהְיֶה־לְךָ לִפֶּה |
| c | וְאַתָּה תִּהְיֶה־לוֹ לְאַלְהִים: |
| 17a | וְאַת־הַמִּטָּה הַזֶּה תִּקַּח בְּיָדְךָ |
| b | אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה־בּוֹ אֶת־הָאֵתֶת: ָךְ |

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| 18a | וַיֵּלֶךְ מֹשֶׁה |
| b | וַיָּשָׁב אֶל־יְתֵר חֹתֶנוּ |
| c | וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ |
| d | אֵלֶּכָּה נָא |
| e | וְאִשׁוּבָה אֶל־אֹחִי אֲשֶׁר־בְּמִצְרַיִם |
| f | וְאַרְאֶה תַּעֲרֹם חַיִּים |
| g | וַיֹּאמֶר יְתֵרוֹ לְמֹשֶׁה |
| h | לָךְ לְשָׁלוֹם: |
| 19a | וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְיָן |
| b | לָךְ |
| c | שָׁב מִצְרַיִם |
| d | כִּי־מָתוּ כָּל־הָאֲנָשִׁים הַמִּבְקָשִׁים אֶת־נַפְשְׁךָ: |
| 20a | וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו |
| b | וַיָּרֻכְבּוּם עַל־הַחֲמֹר |
| c | וַיָּשָׁב אֶרֶצָה מִצְרַיִם |
| d | וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת־מִטָּה הָאֱלֹהִים בְּיָדוֹ: |
| 21a | וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה |
| b | בְּלִבְתֶּךָ לָשׁוּב מִצְרַיִמָּה |
| c | רְאֵה |
| d | כָּל־הַמּוֹפְתִים אֲשֶׁר־שִׁמְתִּי בְיָדְךָ |
| e | וַעֲשִׂיתָם לִפְנֵי פָרְעָה |
| f | וְאֲנִי אֲחַזֵּק אֶת־לְבּוֹ |
| g | וְלֹא יִשְׁלַח אֶת־הָעָם: |
| 22a | וְאָמַרְתָּ אֶל־פָּרְעָה |
| b | כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה |
| c | בְּנֵי כְּכַרִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל: |
| 23a | וְאָמַר אֵלָיְךָ |
| b | שְׁלַח אֶת־בְּנֵי וְעַבְדֵּי |
| c | וְתִמְאָן לְשַׁלְּחוֹ |
| d | הִנֵּה אֲנִכִּי הִרַג אֶת־בְּנֶךָ בְּכַרְדִּי: |
| 24a | וַיְהִי בְּכַרְדִּי בְּמִלּוֹן |
| b | וַיִּפְגְּשׁוּהוּ יְהוָה |
| c | וַיִּבְקֹשׁ הַמִּיתוֹ: |
| 25a | וַתִּקַּח צַפְרָה צֹר |
| b | וַתִּכְרֹת אֶת־עֶרְלַת בְּנָהּ |
| c | וַתִּתְּנֵה לְרַגְלָיו |

Chapter 4/5

d וַיֹּאמֶר

e כִּי חֲתַן־קָמִים אַתָּה לִי:

26a וַיִּרְךָ מֹמְנוּ

b אִזְ אֲמָרָה

c חֲתַן קָמִים לְמוֹלֶת: הַ

27a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַהֲרֹן

b לֵךְ לִקְרַאת מֹשֶׁה הַמִּדְבָּרָה

c וַיֵּלֶךְ

d וַיִּפְגְּשֵׁהוּ בְּהַר הָאֱלֹהִים

e וַיִּשְׁק־לוֹ:

28a וַיַּגֵּד מֹשֶׁה לְאַהֲרֹן

b אֵת כָּל־דִּבְרֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַח

c וְאֵת כָּל־הָאֵתָת אֲשֶׁר צִוָּהוּ:

29a וַיֵּלֶךְ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן

b וַיֹּאסְפוּ אֶת־כָּל־זִקְנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

30a וַיְדַבֵּר אַהֲרֹן אֵת כָּל־הַדִּבְרִים אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה

b וַיַּעַשׂ הָאֵתָת לְעֵינֵי הָעָם:

31a וַיֹּאמֶן הָעָם

b וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ כִּי־פָקַד יְהוָה אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

c וְכִי רָאָה אֶת־עֲנָנִים

d וַיִּקְרֹוּ

e וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ:

5:1a וְאַחֵר

b בָּאוּ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן

c וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־פְּרַעֲה

d כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

e שְׁלַח אֶת־עַמִּי

f וַיַּחֲנוּ לִי בַּמִּדְבָּר:

2a וַיֹּאמֶר פְּרַעֲה

b מִי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר אֲשַׁמְעֶ בְּקִלּוֹ לְשַׁלַּח אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל

c לֹא יִדְעָתִי אֶת־יְהוָה

d וְגַם אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא אֲשַׁלַּח:

3a וַיֹּאמְרוּ

b אֱלֹהֵי הָעֶבְרִים נִקְרָא עָלֵינוּ

c גִּלְכָּה נָא הָרֹךְ שְׁלֹשַׁת יָמִים בַּמִּדְבָּר

d וַנִּזְבַּחָה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

e פֶּן־יִפְגְּעֵנוּ בַּדֶּבֶר אוֹ בַּחֲרָב:

4a וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם

b לָמָּה מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן תִּפְרִיעוּ אֶת־הָעָם מִמַּעֲשָׂיו

c לָכוּ לִסְבֹּל־חִיכָם:

5a וַיֹּאמֶר פְּרַעֲה

b הַנִּרְכָּבִים עִתָּה עִם הָאָרֶץ

c וְהַשְׁבַּתֶּם אֹתָם מִסְבָּלָתָם:

6a וַיְצֹו פְּרַעֲה בַיּוֹם הַהוּא

Chapter 5

- b אֶת־הַנָּשִׁים בָּעָם וְאֶת־שֹׁטְרֵי לֵאמֹר:
7a לֹא תֹאסְפוּן לַחַת תָּבֶן לָעָם לִלְבָן הַלְבָּנִים כְּתִמּוּל שְׁלֹשָׁם
b הֵם יִלְכוּ וְקִשְׁשׁוּ לָהֶם תָּבֶן:
8a וְאֶת־מִתְכַנֶּת הַלְבָּנִים אֲשֶׁר הֵם עֹשִׂים תִּמּוּל שְׁלֹשָׁם תִּשְׁיִמוּ עֲלֵיהֶם
b לֹא תִנְרְעוּ מִמֶּנּוּ
c כִּי־נִרְפִים הֵם
d עַל־כֵּן הֵם צִעֲקִים לֵאמֹר
e גִּלְכָּה נִזְבַּחַה לֵאלֹהֵינוּ:
9a תִּכְבֹּד הָעֶבְרָה עַל־הָאֲנָשִׁים
b וְיַעֲשֻׁבָּהּ
c וְאַל־יִשְׁעוּ בְּדִבְרֵי־שֹׁקֶר:
10a וַיֵּצְאוּ נָשִׁי הָעָם וְשֹׁטְרֵי
b וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־הָעָם לֵאמֹר
c כֹּה אָמַר פֶּרְעֶה
d אִינִי נָתַן לָכֶם תָּבֶן:
11a אַתֶּם
b לָכוּ קַחוּ לָכֶם תָּבֶן
c מֵאֲשֶׁר תִּמְצְאוּ כִּי
d אֵין נִגְרַע מֵעֲבֹדְתְכֶם דָּבָר:
12a וַיִּפֹּץ הָעָם בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
b לִקְשֹׁשׁ קֹשׁ לַתָּבֶן:
13a וְהַנָּשִׁים אֵצִים לֵאמֹר
b כֹּלוּ מַעֲשֵׂיכֶם דִּבְרֵי־יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ
c כַּאֲשֶׁר בְּהִיּוֹת הַתָּבֶן:
14a וַיָּבֹאוּ שֹׁטְרֵי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
b אֲשֶׁר־שָׁמוּ עֲלֵהֶם נָשִׁי פֶּרְעֶה לֵאמֹר
c מִדּוּעַ לֹא כָלִיתֶם חֲקֻכִּם לִלְבָן כְּתִמּוּל שְׁלֹשָׁם
d גַּם־תִּמּוּל גַּם־הַיּוֹם:
15a וַיָּבֹאוּ שֹׁטְרֵי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
b וַיִּצְעֲקוּ אֶל־פֶּרְעֶה לֵאמֹר
c לָמָּה תַעֲשֶׂה כֹה לַעֲבָדֶיךָ:
16a תָּבֶן אֵין נָתַן לַעֲבָדֶיךָ
b וְלִבָּנִים אֹמְרִים לָנוּ עָשׂוּ
c וְהִנֵּה עֹבְדֶיךָ מִכִּים
d וְחָטָאת עִמָּךְ:
17a וַיֹּאמֶר
b נִרְפִים אַתֶּם נִרְפִים
c עַל־כֵּן אַתֶּם אֹמְרִים
d גִּלְכָּה נִזְבַּחַה לַיהוָה:
18a וַעֲתָה
b לָכוּ עֲבְדוּ
c וְתָבֶן לֹא־יִנָּתֵן לָכֶם
d וְתָבֶן לִבָּנִים תַּחֲנוּ:
19a וַיֵּרְאוּ שֹׁטְרֵי בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶתֶם בָּרַע לֵאמֹר
b לֹא־תִנְרְעוּ מִלְּבַנֵיכֶם דִּבְרֵי־יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ:

Chapter 5/6

20a וַיִּפְגְּעוּ אֶת־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶת־אַהֲרֹן נֹצְבִים לִקְרָאתָם

b בַּצֹּאתָם מֵאֵת פְּרָעָה:

21a וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם

b וַיֹּרֶא יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם וַיִּשְׁפֹּט

c אֲשֶׁר הִבְאִשְׁתֶּם אֶת־רִיחֲנוּ בְעֵינֵי פְרָעָה וּבְעֵינֵי עֲבָדָיו

d לְתַת־חֶרֶב בֵּינָם לְהִרְגָנוּ:

22a וַיֹּשֶׁב מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר

b אֲדֹנָי

c לָמָּה הִרְעַתָּה לָעַם הַזֶּה

d לָמָּה זֶה שְׁלַחְתָּנִי:

23a וּמֵאֵז בָּאתִי אֶל־פְּרָעָה לְדַבֵּר בְּשִׁמּוֹךְ

b הִרַע לָעַם הַזֶּה

c וְהַצַּל לֹא־הִצַּלְתָּ אֶת־עַמּוֹדִי:

6:1a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה

b עֲתָה תִּרְאֶה

c אֲשֶׁר אֶעֱשֶׂה לְפְרָעָה

d כִּי בִיד חֲזָקָה וַיִּשְׁלַחַם

e וּבִיד חֲזָקָה יִגְרַשֶׁם מֵאֶרְצוֹ: ס

2a וַיַּדְבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה

b וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו

c אֲנִי יְהוָה:

3a וְאֶרָא אֶל־אַבְרָהָם אֶל־יִצְחָק וְאֶל־יַעֲקֹב בָּאֵל שָׁקִי

b וְשָׁמִי יְהוָה לֹא נִדְעַתִי לָהֶם:

4a וְגַם הִקְמַתִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אִתָּם

b לְתַת לָהֶם אֶת־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן

c אֵת אֶרֶץ מִגְרִיהֶם אֲשֶׁר־גָּרוּ בָּהּ:

5a וְגַם אֲנִי שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת־נֶאֱמָר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

b אֲשֶׁר מִצְרַיִם מַעֲבִידִם אִתָּם

c וְאָזְכֹר אֶת־בְּרִיתִי:

6a לְכֹן

b אָמַר לְבְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל

c אֲנִי יְהוָה

d וְהוֹצֵאתִי אִתְּכֶם מִתַּחַת סִבְלַת מִצְרַיִם

e וְהִצַּלְתִּי אִתְּכֶם מִעַבְדֹתָם

f וְנִאֲלַתִּי אִתְּכֶם בְּזֹרַע נְשׁוּיָה

g וּבִשְׁפָטִים גְּדֹלִים:

7a וְלִקְחַתִּי אִתְּכֶם לִי לָעַם

b וְהִיִּיתִי לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים

c וַיִּדְעֻתָם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם

d הַמוֹצִיא אִתְּכֶם מִתַּחַת סִבְלוֹת מִצְרַיִם:

8a וְהִבֵּאתִי אִתְּכֶם אֶל־הָאָרֶץ

b אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאַתִּי אֶת־יָדִי

c לְתַת אֹתָהּ לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב

d וְנִתַּתִּי אֹתָהּ לָכֶם מִזִּקְשָׁהּ

Chapter 6

e אני יהוה:

9a וידבר משה בן אל-בני ישראל

b ולא שמעו אל-משה

c מקצור רוח ומעבדה קשה: ה

10 וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר:

11a בא דבר אל-פרעה מלך מצרים

b וישלח את-בני-ישראל מארצו:

12a וידבר משה לפני יהוה לאמר

b הן בני-ישראל לא-שמעו אלי

c ואיך ושמעני פרעה

e ואני ערל שפתיים: ה

13a וידבר יהוה אל-משה ואל-אהרן

b ויצום אל-בני ישראל ואל-פרעה מלך מצרים

c להוציא את-בני-ישראל מארץ מצרים: ס

14a אלה ראשי בית-אבתם

b בני ראובן בכר ישראל

c חנוך ופלוא חצרון וזכרי

d אלה משפחת ראובן:

15a ובני שמעון

b ומואל וימין ואהר וזכין וזחר ושאול בן-הקנענית

c אלה משפחת שמעון:

16a ואלה שמות בני-לוי לתלדתם

b גרשון וקהת ומררי

c ושני חיי לוי שבע ושלשים ומאת שנה:

17 בני גרשון לבני ושמעי למשפחתם:

18a ובני קהת עמרם ויצהר וזכרון ועזיאל

b ושני חיי קהת שלש ושלשים ומאת שנה:

19a ובני מררי מחלי ומושי

b אלה משפחת הלוי לתלדתם:

20a ויקח עמרם את-יוכבד דחתו לו לאשה

ותלד לו את-אהרן ואת-משה

c ושני חיי עמרם שבע ושלשים ומאת שנה:

21 ובני יצהר קרח ונפג וזכרי:

22 ובני עזיאל מישאל ואלצפן וסחרי:

23a ויקח אהרן את-אלישבע בת-עמינדב אחות נחשון לו לאשה

b ותלד לו את-נדב ואת-אביהוא את-אלעזר ואת-איתמר:

24a ובני קרח אסיר ואלקנה ואביאסף

b אלה משפחת הקרחי:

25a ואלעזר בן-אהרן לקח-לו מבנות פוטיאל לו לאשה

b ותלד לו את-פינחס

c אלה ראשי אבות הלויים למשפחתם:

26a הוא אהרן ומשה

Chapter 6/7

| | |
|-------|---|
| b | אֲשֶׁר אָמַר יְהוָה לָהֶם |
| c | הוֹצִיאוּ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם עַל־צָבָאָתָם: |
| 27a | הֵם הַמְדַּבְּרִים אֶל־פְּרָעָה מִלֶּךְ־מִצְרַיִם |
| b | לְהוֹצִיֵּא אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם |
| c | הוּא מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן: |
| 28 | וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: ה |
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| 29a | וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר |
| b | אֲנִי יְהוָה |
| c | דַּבֵּר אֶל־פְּרָעָה מִלֶּךְ מִצְרַיִם אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי דֹבֵר אֵלֶיךָ: |
| 30a | וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה |
| b | הֵן אֲנִי עֶרְל שְׁפָתַיִם |
| c | וְאִידִּי יִשְׁמַע אֵלַי פְּרָעָה: ה |
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| 7:1a | וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה |
| b | רְאֵה נִתְחַיֵּךְ אֱלֹהִים לְפָרָעָה |
| c | וְאַהֲרֹן אֲחִידִּי יִהְיֶה נְבִיאִי: |
| 2a | אָתָּה תְּדַבֵּר אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֲצַוְךָ |
| b | וְאַהֲרֹן אֲחִידִּי יְדַבֵּר אֶל־פְּרָעָה |
| c | וְשַׁלַּח אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶצוֹ: |
| 3a | וְאֲנִי אֶקְשֶׁה אֶת־לֵב פְּרָעָה |
| b | וְהִרְבִּיתִּי אֶת־אֲחֹתִי וְאֶת־מוֹפְתֵי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: |
| 4a | וְלֹא־יִשְׁמַע אֲלֵכֶם פְּרָעָה |
| b | וְנִתְחַיֵּי אֶת־יָדַי בְּמִצְרַיִם |
| c | וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶת־צְבָאָתִי אֶת־עַמִּי בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם |
| d | בְּשִׁפְטִים גְּדֹלִים: |
| 5a | וַיֵּדְעוּ מִצְרַיִם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה |
| b | בְּגִשְׁתִּי אֶת־יָדַי עַל־מִצְרַיִם |
| c | וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתּוֹכָם: |
| 6a | וַיַּעַשׂ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן |
| b | כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֹתָם כֵּן עָשׂוּ: |
| 7a | וּמֹשֶׁה בֶן־שִׁמְעוֹן שָׁנָה |
| b | וְאַהֲרֹן בֶּן־שִׁלֵּשׁ וּשְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה |
| c | בְּדַבְּרָם אֶל־פְּרָעָה: ה |
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| 8 | וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאַל־אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר: |
| 9a | כִּי יְדַבֵּר אֲלֵכֶם פְּרָעָה לֵאמֹר |
| b | תִּנּוּ לָכֶם מוֹפֵת |
| c | וְאָמַרְתֶּם אֶל־אַהֲרֹן |
| d | קַח אֶת־מַטְּךָ וְהַשְׁלַךְ לִפְנֵי־פְרָעָה |
| e | וְהִי לְתִנּוּן: |
| 10a | וַיָּבֹא מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֶל־פְּרָעָה |
| b | וַיַּעַשׂוּ כֵן |
| c | כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה |
| d | וַיִּשְׁלַךְ אַהֲרֹן אֶת־מַטְּהוֹ לִפְנֵי פְרָעָה וּלְפָנַי עָבְדִּיו |

Chapter 7

e וַיְהִי לַחֲנִין:

11a וַיִּקְרָא גַם־פֶּרֶעַה לַחֲכָמִים וְלַמְּכַשְׁפִּים

b וַיַּעֲשׂוּ גַם־הֵם חֲרָטָמִי מִצָּרִים בְּלִהְטִיהֶם בֶּן:

12a וַיִּשְׁלִיכוּ אִישׁ מַטְהוּ

b וַיְהִי לַחֲנִינִם

c וַיִּבְלַע מַטְה־אֶהֱרֹן אֶת־מַטְתָּם:

13a וַיַּחֲזֹק לֵב פֶּרֶעַה

b וְלֹא שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים

c כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה: ה

14a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה

b כְּבֹד לֵב פֶּרֶעַה

c מֵאֵן לִשְׁלַח הָעָם:

15a לָךְ אֶל־פֶּרֶעַה בַּבֶּקֶר

b הִנֵּה יֵצֵא הַמִּיָּמָה

c וְנִצְבֹּתָ לִקְרָאתוֹ עַל־שֹׁפֶת הַיָּאֵר

d וְהַמַּטֵּה אֲשֶׁר־נִהַפֵּךְ לְנֹחַשׁ

e תִּקַּח בְּיָדְךָ:

16a וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו

b יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הָעִבְרִים שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר

c שְׁלַח אֶת־עַמִּי

d וַיַּעֲבֹדְנִי בַּמִּדְבָּר

e וְהִנֵּה לֹא־שָׁמַעְתָּ עֲד־כֹּה:

17a כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה

b בְּזֹאת תֵּדַע כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה

c הִנֵּה אֲנִכִּי מִכָּה בַּמַּטֵּה אֲשֶׁר־בְּיָדִי עַל־הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר בַּיָּאֵר

e וְנִהַפְכוּ לָדָם:

18a וְהִדְגָּה אֲשֶׁר־בַּיָּאֵר תַּמּוּת

b וּבָאֵשׁ הַיָּאֵר

c וְנִלְאוּ מִצָּרִים לְשִׁתּוֹת מַיִם מִן־הַיָּאֵר: ס

19a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה

b אָמַר אֶל־אֶהֱרֹן

c קַח מַטֵּךְ וְנִטְהֵ־יָדְךָ עַל־מַיְמֵי מִצָּרִים

d עַל־נְהַרְתָּם עַל־יָאֲרֵיהֶם וְעַל־אֲגַמִּיָּהֶם וְעַל כָּל־מִקְוֵה מַיְמִיָּהֶם

e וַיְהִי־דָם

f וְהָיָה דָם בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם

g וּבָעֲצִים וּבָאֲבָקִים:

20a וַיַּעֲשׂוּ־כֵן מֹשֶׁה וְאֶהֱרֹן

b כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה

c וַיָּבֹאוּ בַּמַּטֵּה

d וַיִּבֹּךְ אֶת־הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר בַּיָּאֵר לְעֵינֵי פֶּרֶעַה וּלְעֵינֵי עַבְדָּיו

e וַיַּהֲפֹכוּ כָּל־הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר־בַּיָּאֵר לָדָם:

21a וְהִדְגָּה אֲשֶׁר־בַּיָּאֵר מָתָה

b וַיִּבָּאֵשׁ הַיָּאֵר

Chapter 7/8

- c ולא יכלו מצרים לשחות מים מן-היאר
d ויהי הדם בכל-ארץ מצרים:
- 22a ויעשו-כן חרטומי מצרים בלטיהם
b בניחזק לב-פרעה
c ולא-שמע אלהם
d כפאשר דבר יהוה:
23a ויפן פרעה
b בניבא אל-ביתו
c ולא-שח לבו נס-לזאת:
24a ויחפרו כל-מצרים סביבת היאר מים לשחות
b כי לא יכלו לשחת מממי היאר:
25 וימלא שבעת ימים אחרי הכות-יתה את-היאר: ה
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- 26a ויאמר יהוה אל-משה
b בא אל-פרעה
c ואמרת אליו
d כה אמר יהוה
e שלח את-עמי ויעבדני:
27a ואם-מאן אתה לשלח
b הנה אנכי נגף את-כל-נבולך בצפרדעים:
28a ושרץ היאר צפרדעים
b ועלו וקאו בביתך
c ובחדר משכבך ועל-מטתך
d ובבית עבדיך ובעמך ובתנוריד ובמשארותיך:
29a ובכה ובעמך ובכל-עבדיך
b יעלו הצפרדעים:
8:1a ויאמר יהוה אל-משה
b אמר אל-אהרן
c נטה את-ידך במטף על-הנהרות
d על-היאים ועל-האנמים
e והעל את-הצפרדעים על-ארץ מצרים:
2a ויש אהרן את-ידו על מימי מצרים
b ונתעל הצפרדע
c ונתכס את-ארץ מצרים:
3a ויעשו-כן חרטומים בלטיהם
b וייעלו את-הצפרדעים על-ארץ מצרים:
4a ויקרא פרעה למשה ולאהרן
b ויאמר
c העתירו אל-יהוה
d ויסר הצפרדעים ממני ומעמי
e ואשלחה את-העם
f ויזבחו ליהוה:
5a ויאמר משה לפרעה
b החפאר עלי
c למתי אעמיר לך ולעבדיך ולעמך להכרית הצפרדעים ממך ומבתיך

Chapter 8

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|-------|---|
| d | רק ביאר תשאַרנה: |
| 6a | וַיֹּאמֶר |
| b | לְמַחֵר |
| c | וַיֹּאמֶר |
| d | כְּדַבֵּרְךָ לְמַעַן חֲדַע כִּי־אֵין פִּיהָנָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ: |
| 7a | וְסֵרוּ הַצִּפְרָדְעִים מִמֶּךָ וּמִבְּתִיד וּמִעֲבָדֶיךָ וּמִעַמֶּךָ |
| b | רק ביאר תשאַרנה: |
| 8a | וַיֵּצֵא מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן מֵעַם פְּרָעָה |
| b | בַּיּוֹצֵעַק מֹשֶׁה אֱלֹהֵיהֶנּוּ עַל־דְּבַר הַצִּפְרָדְעִים אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם לְפָרְעָה: |
| 9a | וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה כְּדַבַּר מֹשֶׁה |
| b | בַּיּוֹמָתוֹ הַצִּפְרָדְעִים מִן־הַבָּתִּים מִן־הַחֲצֹרֹת וּמִן־הַשָּׂדֶה: |
| 10a | וַיִּצְבְּרוּ אֹתָם חֲמֹרִם חֲמֹרִם |
| b | בַּחֲבֹאֵשׁ הָאָרֶץ: |
| 11a | וַיֵּרָא פְּרָעָה כִּי הָיְתָה הָרוּחָה |
| b | בַּהֲכַבֵּד אֲחִלְבוּ וְלֹא שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִם |
| c | כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה: ס |
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| 12a | וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה |
| b | אָמַר אֶל־אַהֲרֹן |
| c | נִשֵּׂה אֶת־מִטֶּךָ |
| d | וְהָךְ אֶת־עַפֵּר הָאָרֶץ |
| e | וְהָיָה לְכֹנֶם בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: |
| 13a | וַיַּעֲשִׂי־כֵן |
| b | בַּיּוֹם אַהֲרֹן אֶת־יָדוֹ בְּמִטָּהוּ |
| c | וַיָּךְ אֶת־עַפֵּר הָאָרֶץ |
| d | וַתַּהֲיִי הַכֹּנֶם בְּאֶדָם וּבְבַתְּחָה |
| e | כָּל־עַפֵּר הָאָרֶץ הָיָה כֹּנִים בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: |
| 14a | וַיַּעֲשִׂי־כֵן הַחֲרָטְמִים בְּלִטְיָהֶם לְהוֹצִיא אֶת־הַכֹּנִים |
| b | וְלֹא יָכֻלוּ |
| c | וַתַּהֲיִי הַכֹּנֶם בְּאֶדָם וּבְבַתְּחָה: |
| 15a | וַיֹּאמְרוּ הַחֲרָטְמִים אֶל־פְּרָעָה |
| b | אֲצַבֵּעַ אֱלֹהִים הוּא |
| c | כִּי־חֹזֶק לִב־פְּרָעָה וְלֹא־שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִם |
| d | כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה: ס |
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| 16a | וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה |
| b | הִשָּׁפֶם בְּבִקֵּר וְהִתְנַצֵּב לִפְנֵי פְרָעָה |
| c | הִנֵּה יוֹצֵא הַמִּיָּמָה |
| d | וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו |
| e | כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה |
| f | שְׁלַח עַמִּי וַיַּעֲבֹדְנִי: |
| 17a | כִּי אִם־אֵינְךָ מוֹשְׁלֵם אֶת־עַמִּי |
| b | הִנְנִי מוֹשְׁלִיחַ בְּךָ וּבַעֲבָדֶיךָ וּבַעַמֶּךָ וּבְבְתִיד אֶת־הָעָרֶב |
| c | וּמִלְאוּ בָתֵּי מִצְרָיִם אֶת־הָעָרֶב |
| d | וְגַם הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־הֵם עָלֶיהָ: |

Chapter 8/9

- 18a וְהַפְלִיתִי בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֶת־אֶרֶץ נָשָׁן
b אֲשֶׁר עָמִי עָמַד עָלֶיהָ
c לְבַלְתִּי הִיּוֹת־שָׁם עָרָב
d לְמַעַן תֵּדַע כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה בְּקֶרֶב הָאָרֶץ:
19a וְשָׁמַתִּי פָּרַח בֵּין עָמִי וּבֵין עַמּוּד
b לְמַחֵר יִהְיֶה הָאֵת הַזֶּה:
20a וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה כֵּן
b וַיִּנְיבָא עָרָב קָבֵד בֵּיתָה פָּרַעַה וּבֵית עֲבָדָיו
c וּבְכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם תִּשְׁחַת הָאָרֶץ מִפְּנֵי הָעָרָב:
21a וַיִּקְרָא פָּרַעַה אֶל־מוֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן
b וַיֹּאמֶר
c לָכוּ וּזְבַחוּ לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם בְּאֶרֶץ:
22a וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה
b לֹא נִכּוֹן לַעֲשׂוֹת כֵּן
c כִּי תוֹעֵבַת מִצְרַיִם נִזְבַּח לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
d הֵן נִזְבַּח אֶת־תוֹעֵבַת מִצְרַיִם לְעֵינֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִסְקְלֵנוּ:
23a הֲרֹךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים גֵּלָד בַּמִּדְבָּר
b וְזָבַחְנוּ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
c כַּאֲשֶׁר יֹאמַר אֱלֹהֵינוּ:
24a וַיֹּאמֶר פָּרַעַה
b אֲנֹכִי אֲשַׁלַּח אֶתְכֶם וּזְבַחְתֶּם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בַּמִּדְבָּר
c רַק הִרְחֵק לֹא־תִרְחִיקוּ לְלֶכֶת
d הֶעֱתִירוּ בְעַדִּי:
25a וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה
b הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי יוֹצֵא מֵעַמּוּד וְהִעֲתַרְתִּי אֶל־יְהוָה
c וְסָר הָעָרָב מִפְּרַעַה מֵעֲבָדָיו וּמֵעַמּוּ מִחֵר
d רַק אֶל־יִסְף פָּרַעַה הַתֵּל
d לְבַלְתִּי שַׁלַּח אֶת־הָעָם לְזִבְחָ לַיהוָה:
26a וַיּוֹצֵא מֹשֶׁה מַעַם פָּרַעַה
b וַיַּעֲתַר אֶל־יְהוָה:
27a וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה כְּדִבְרֵי מֹשֶׁה
b וַיִּסָּר הָעָרָב מִפְּרַעַה מֵעֲבָדָיו וּמֵעַמּוּ
c לֹא נִשְׁאָר אֶחָד:
28a וַיִּכְבֹּד פָּרַעַה אֶת־לְבוֹ נָם בַּפֶּעַם הַזֹּאת
b וְלֹא שַׁלַּח אֶת־הָעָם: ה

- 9:1a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מוֹשֶׁה
b בֹּא אֶל־פָּרַעַה
c וּדְבַרְתָּ אֵלָיו
d כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הָעִבְרִיִּים
e שַׁלַּח אֶת־עָמִי וַיַּעֲבֹדְנִי:
2a כִּי אִם־מֵאֵן אַתָּה לְשַׁלַּח
b וְעוֹדֵד מִחֲזִיק בָּם:
3a הִנֵּה יַד־יְהוָה הִזְיָה בְּמִקְנֶךָ אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה
b בַּסּוֹסִים בַּחֲמֹרִים בַּגְּמִלִּים בַּבָּקָר וּבַצֹּאן

Chapter 9

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|-------|--|
| c | דָּבַר כְּבֹד מְאֹד: |
| 4a | וַהֲפֹלָה יְהוָה בֵּין מִקְנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבֵין מִקְנֵה מִצְרַיִם |
| b | וְלֹא יָמוּת מִכָּל־לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל דָּבָר: |
| 5a | וַיֵּשֶׁם יְהוָה מוֹעֵד לֵאמֹר |
| b | מִחֹר יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה בָּאָרֶץ: |
| 6a | וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה מִמִּחְרָת |
| b | בְּיָמָת כָּל מִקְנֵה מִצְרַיִם |
| c | וּמִמִּקְנֵה בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא־מוּת אֶחָד: |
| 7a | וַיִּשְׁלַח פָּרְעָה |
| b | וַהֲגָה לֹא־מוּת מִמִּקְנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד־אֶחָד |
| c | וַיִּכְבֹּד לֵב פָּרְעָה |
| d | וְלֹא שָׁלַח אֶת־הָעָם: ה |
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| 8a | וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל־אַהֲרֹן |
| b | קָחוּ לָכֶם מִלֹּא חֲפִינֵיכֶם פִּיחַ כִּבְשָׁן |
| c | וּזְרְקוּ מֹשֶׁה הַשְּׂמִימָה לַעֲיִנִי פָרְעָה: |
| 9 | וְהָיָה לְאַבְקָה עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וְהָיָה עַל־הָאָדָם וְעַל־הַבְּהֵמָה לַשָּׂחִין פָּרַח אֲבַעֲבַעַת בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: |
| 10a | וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־פִּיחַ הַכִּבְשָׁן |
| b | וַיַּעֲמִדּוּ לִפְנֵי פָרְעָה |
| c | וַיִּזְרֹק אֹתוֹ מֹשֶׁה הַשְּׂמִימָה |
| d | וַיְהִי שָׁחִין אֲבַעֲבַעַת פָּרַח בָּאָדָם וּבַבְּהֵמָה: |
| 11a | וְלֹא־יָכְלוּ הַחֲרָטָמִים לַעֲמֹד לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה מִפְּנֵי הַשָּׁחִין |
| b | כִּי־הָיָה הַשָּׁחִין בַּחֲרָטָמָם וּבְכָל־מִצְרַיִם: |
| 12 | וַיַּחֲזֹק יְהוָה אֶת־לֵב פָּרְעָה וְלֹא שָׁמַע אֲלֵהֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה: ס |
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| 13a | וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה |
| b | הִשָּׁכֶם בְּבֶקֶר וַהֲתִיצַב לִפְנֵי פָרְעָה |
| c | וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו |
| d | כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הָעִבְרִים |
| e | שְׁלַח אֶת־עַמִּי וַיַּעֲבֹדֵנִי: |
| 14a | כִּי בַפֶּעַם הַזֹּאת |
| b | אֲנִי שְׁלַח אֶת־כָּל־מַנְפְּתֵי אֶל־לִבִּי וּבַעֲבֹדֶיךָ וּבַעֲמֹד |
| c | בַּעֲבוּר תַּדַּע כִּי אֵין כֹּמֶנִי בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ: |
| 15a | כִּי עָתָה שְׁלַחְתִּי אֶת־יָדִי |
| b | וְאֵךְ אוֹתָךְ וְאֶת־עַמְּךָ בְּדָבָר |
| c | וַתִּכָּחַד מִן־הָאָרֶץ: |
| 16a | וְאוֹלָם |
| b | בַּעֲבוּר זֹאת הָעַמְּדָתִיךָ |
| c | בַּעֲבוּר הָרֹאשֶׁת אֶת־כַּחֲתִי |
| d | וְלִמְעַן סֹפֵר שְׂמִי בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ: |
| 17a | עוֹדֶךָ מִסְתַּלֵּל בַּעֲמִי |
| b | לְבַלְתִּי שְׁלָחָם: |
| 18a | הִנְנִי מִמְטִיר כֶּעָת מִחֹר |
| b | בְּרֹד כְּבֹד מְאֹד |

- c אשר לא־היה כמוהו במצרים למן־היום הוסדה ועד־עתה:
19a ועתה
b שלח
c העז את־מקנך ואת כל־אשר לך בשדה
d כל־האדם והבהמה אשר־ימצא בשדה ולא יאסף הביתה
e ויכר עליהם הבקר ומתו:
20a תִּירָא אֶת־דְּבַר יְהוָה מֵעֲבָדֵי פָרְעָה
b הניס את־עֲבָדָיו ואת־מִקְנֵהוּ אֶל־הַבָּתִּים:
21a וְאִשֶּׁר לֹא־שָׂם לְבוֹ אֶל־דְּבַר יְהוָה
b וַיַּעֲזֹב אֶת־עֲבָדָיו ואת־מִקְנֵהוּ בַשָּׂדֶה: ה
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- 22a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה
b גִּטָּה אֶת־יֶדְךָ עַל־הַשָּׁמַיִם ויהי בְּרֹךְ בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
c עַל־הָאָדָם וְעַל־הַבְּהֵמָה וְעַל כָּל־עֶשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:
23a וַיֵּט מֹשֶׁה אֶת־מַטְּהוֹ עַל־הַשָּׁמַיִם
b וַיְהִי וְתַן קֶלֶת וּבֹכֶר
c וְתַחֲלֹךְ אֵשׁ אֶרֶצָה
d וַיִּמָּטֵר יְהוָה בְּרֹךְ עַל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:
24a וַיְהִי בְּרֹךְ וְאֵשׁ מִתְלַקַּחַת בְּתוֹךְ הַבֹּקֶר
b כָּבֵד מְאֹד אִשֶּׁר לֹא־הָיָה כְּמוֹהוּ בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
c מֵאִזְ הָיְתָה לְגוֹי:
25a וַיֵּךְ הַבֹּקֶר בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֶת כָּל־אִשֶּׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה מֵאָדָם וְעַד־בְּהֵמָה
b וְאֵת כָּל־עֶשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה חָכָה הַבֹּקֶר
c וְאֶת־כָּל־עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה שָׁבַר:
26a רַק בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
b לֹא הָיָה בְּרֹךְ:
27a וַיִּשְׁלַח פָּרְעָה
b וַיִּקְרָא לְמֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן
c וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם
d חֲטָאִתִּי הַפַּעַם
e וַיְהִי הַצָּדִיק
f וְאֲנִי וְעַמִּי הָרָשָׁעִים:
28a הַעֲתִירוּ אֶל־יְהוָה
b וְרַב מִהֵיט קֶלֶת אֱלֹהִים וּבֹכֶר
c וְאַשְׁלַחָה אֲחֵכֶם
d וְלֹא חֹסְפֹן לַעֲמֹד:
29a וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מֹשֶׁה
b כִּצְאֹתִי אֶת־הָעִיר
c אֶפְרַשׁ אֶת־כַּפִּי אֶל־יְהוָה
d תַּקְלֹת וַיַּחְדְּלוּן וְהַבֹּקֶר לֹא יִהְיֶה־עוֹד
e לְמַעַן תִּדַּע כִּי לִיהוָה הָאֶרֶץ:
30a וְאַתָּה וְעֲבָדֶיךָ
b יִדְעֹתִי כִּי טָרָם תִּירָאוּן מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים:
31a וְהַפְשַׁתָּה וְהַשְׁעָרָה נִכְתָּה
b כִּי הַשְׁעָרָה אָכִיב וְהַפְשַׁתָּה נִכְעַל:

Chapter 9/10

32a והחטה והכסמת לא גבו

b כי אפילת הנה:

33a ויצא משה מעם פרעה אתהעיר

b ויפרש כפיו אל-יהוה

c ויחידלו הקלות והבדר

d ומטר לא-נתך ארצה:

34a ויך פרעה כי-חדל המטר והבדר והקלת

b ויסף לחטא

c ויכבד לבו הוא ועבדיו:

35a ויחזק לב פרעה ולא שלח את-בני ישראל

b ובאשר דבר יהוה ביד-משה: פ

10:1a ויאמר יהוה אל-משה

b בא אל-פרעה

c כי-אני הכבדתי את-לבו ואת-לב עבדיו

d למען שתי אחתי אלה בקרב:

2a ולמען תספר באזני בנך ובן-בנך את אשר התעללתי במצרים

b ואת-אחתי אשר-שמתי בם

c וידעתם כי-אני יהוה:

3a ויבא משה ואהרן אל-פרעה

b ויאמרו אליו

c כה-אמר יהוה אלהי העברים

d עד-מתי מאנת לענת מפני

e שלח עמי ויעבדני:

4a כי אם-קאן אתה לשלח את-עמי

b הנני מביא מחר ארבה בגבלך:

5a וכסה את-עין הארץ

b ולא יוכל לראת את-הארץ

c ואכל את-יתר הפלטה

d הנשארת לכם מן-הבדר

e ואכל את-כל-העץ הצמח לכם מן-השדה:

6a ומלאו בתיך ובתי כל-עבדיך ובתי כל-מצרים

b אשר לא-ראו אבתיך ואבות אבתיך מיום היותם על-הארמה עד היום הזה

c ויפן

d ויצא מעם פרעה:

7a ויאמרו עבדי פרעה אליו

b עד-מתי יהיה זה לנו למוקש

c שלח את-האנשים ויעבדו את-יהוה אלהיהם

d הטרם תדע כי אבדה מצרים

8a ויושב את-משה ואת-אהרן אל-פרעה

b ויאמר אלהם

c לכו עבדו את-יהוה אלהיכם

d מי ומי ההלכים:

9a ויאמר משה

b בנערינו ובזקנינו גלך

Chapter 10

- c בְּכִנְיָנוּ וּבְכִנּוּתָנוּ בְּצִאֲנוּנוּ וּבְבִקְרָנוּ גִלְדִּי
d כִּי חֲגִי'הוּהָ לָנוּ:
- 10a וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים
b יְהִי כֵן יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר אֲשַׁלַּח אֲחֵכֶם וְאֶת־טַפְכֶּם
c רְאוּ כִּי רָעָה נִגְדָּה פָּנִיכֶם:
- 11a לֹא כֵן
b לְכוּ־נָא הַגְּבָרִים וְעִבְדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה
c כִּי אַתֶּה אַתָּם מִבְּקָשִׁים
d וַיִּנָּקֶשׁ אַתָּם מֵאֵת פָּנֵי פִרְעֹה: הִ
- 12a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה
b נִטָּה יָרֵךְ עַל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּאַרְבֶּה
c וַיַּעַל עַל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
d וַיֹּאכַל אֶת־כָּל־עֵשֶׂב הָאֶרֶץ אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר הִשְׁאִיר הַבְּקָר:
- 13a וַיֵּט מֹשֶׁה אֶת־מַטְּהוֹ עַל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
b וַיַּהֲרֹה נֶהַג רֹיחַ קָדִים בְּאֶרֶץ
c כָּל־הַיּוֹם הַהוּא וְכָל־הַלָּיְלָה
d הַבִּקְרָה הָיָה
e וְרוּחַ הַקָּדִים נָשָׂא אֶת־הָאַרְבֶּה:
- 14a וַיַּעַל הָאַרְבֶּה עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
b וַיִּנְיֹחַ בְּכָל גְּבוּל מִצְרַיִם
c כְּבֹד מְאֹד
d לִפְנֵי לֹא־הָיָה כֵן אַרְבֶּה כְּמֹהוּ וְאַחֲרָיו לֹא יִהְיֶה־כֵּן:
- 15a וַיָּכֶס אֶת־עֵין כָּל־הָאֶרֶץ
b וַתַּחֲשֹׁךְ הָאֶרֶץ
c וַיֹּאכַל אֶת־כָּל־עֵשֶׂב הָאֶרֶץ וְאֵת כָּל־פְּרִי הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר הוֹתִיר הַבְּקָר
d וְלֹא־נֹתַר כָּל־יֵרֶק בָּעֵץ וּבְעֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:
- 16a וַיִּמָּהַר פִּרְעֹה לִקְרֹא לְמֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן
b וַיֹּאמֶר
c חֲטָאתִי לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְלָכֶם:
17a וְעַתָּה
b שָׂא נָא חַטָּאתִי אֵךְ הַפְּעַם
c וְהַעֲתִירוּ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
e וַיֹּסֶר מִעָלָי רַק אֶת־חַמּוֹת הַזֶּה:
- 18a וַיֵּצֵא מֵעַם פִּרְעֹה
b וַיַּעֲתֵר אֶל־יְהוָה:
19a וַיַּהֲפֹךְ יְהוָה רֹיחָיִם חֲזָק מְאֹד
b וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת־הָאַרְבֶּה
c וַיַּחֲקֶעְהוּ יָמָה סוּף
d לֹא נִשְׁאַר אַרְבֶּה אֶחָד בְּכָל גְּבוּל מִצְרַיִם:
- 20a וַיַּחֲזֹק יְהוָה אֶת־לֵב פִּרְעֹה
b וְלֹא שָׁלַח אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: הִ
-
- 21a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה
b נִטָּה יָרֵךְ עַל־הַשָּׂמִימִם וַיְהִי חֹשֶׁךְ עַל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
c וַיִּמָּשׁ חֹשֶׁךְ:

Chapter 10/11

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| 22a | וַיֵּשׁ מֹשֶׁה אֶת־יָדָיו עַל־הַשָּׁמַיִם |
| b | וַיְהִי חֲשֶׁךְ־אֲפֹלָה בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שְׁלֹשַׁת יָמִים: |
| 23a | לֹא־רָאוּ אִישׁ אֶת־אָחִיו |
| b | וְלֹא־קָמוּ אִישׁ מִתַּחְתּוֹ שְׁלֹשַׁת יָמִים |
| c | וְלִכְלֹל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הָיָה אוֹר בְּמוֹשְׁבֹתָם: |
| 24a | וַיִּקְרָא פְּרַעֲה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה |
| b | וַיֹּאמֶר |
| c | לָכוּ עֲבְדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה |
| d | כִּי זֵאת אֲנִי וְבָנֵיכֶם וּבְקָרְכֶם יָצָנְוּ |
| e | גַּם־טַפְכֶּם וְלֶדְ עִמָּכֶם: |
| 25a | וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה |
| b | גַּם־אַתָּה תִּתֵּן בְּיָדֵנוּ זִבְחִים וְעֹלוֹת |
| c | וְעֲשִׂינוּ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ: |
| 26a | וְגַם־מִקְנֵנוּ וְלֶדְ עִמָּנוּ |
| b | לֹא תִשָּׂאֵר פְּרִסָּה כִּי מִמֶּנּוּ נִקַּח לַעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ |
| c | וְאִנְחֵנוּ לֹא־נִדְעַ מִה־נִּעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה עַד־בֹּאוּ שָׁמָּה: |
| 27a | וַיַּחֲזֹק יְהוָה אֶת־לֵב פְּרַעֲה |
| b | וְלֹא אָבָה לְשַׁלְּחָם: |
| 28a | וַיֹּאמֶר־לוֹ פְּרַעֲה |
| b | לֶךְ מֵעַלִּי |
| c | הֲשֹׁמֵר לֶךְ אֶל־תַּסֵּף רְאוֹת פָּנַי |
| d | כִּי בַיּוֹם רֵאשִׁית פָּנַי תָּמוּת: |
| 29a | וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה |
| b | כֵּן דִּבַּרְתָּ |
| c | לֹא־אֶסֶף עוֹד רְאוֹת פָּנֶיךָ: הֵן |
| 11:1a | וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה |
| b | עוֹד נִנֵּעַ אַחֲרַי אָבִיא עַל־פְּרַעֲה וְעַל־מִצְרַיִם |
| c | אֲחַר־כֵּן יִשְׁלַח אֲתָכֶם מִזֶּה |
| d | כְּשִׁלְחוֹ |
| e | כָּל־הַגֶּרֶשׁ יִגְרֹשׁ אֲתָכֶם מִזֶּה: |
| 2a | וְדַבֵּר־נָא בְּאָזְנֵי הָעָם |
| b | וַיִּשְׁאָלוּ אִישׁ מֵאֵת רֵעֵהוּ וּמֵאֵת רֵעוּתָה כָּל־כֶּסֶף וְכָלִי זָהָב: |
| 3a | וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה אֶת־חֶן הָעָם בְּעֵינֵי מִצְרַיִם |
| b | גַּם הָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה גָּדוֹל מְאֹד בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם |
| c | בְּעֵינֵי עַבְדֵי־פְּרַעֲה וּבְעֵינֵי הָעָם: ס |
| 4a | וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה |
| b | כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה |
| c | כַּחֲצַת הַלַּיְלָה אֲנִי יוֹצֵא בְּתוֹךְ מִצְרַיִם: |
| 5a | וּמֵת כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם |
| b | מִבְּכוֹר פְּרַעֲה הַיֹּשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאוֹ עַד בְּכוֹר הַשִּׁפְחָה אֲשֶׁר אַחֲרֵי הָרָחִים |
| c | וְכָל בְּכוֹר בְּהֵמָה: |
| 6a | וְהָיְתָה צִעֲקָה גְדֹלָה בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם |
| b | אֲשֶׁר כָּמוֹהוּ לֹא נִהְיְתָה וְכָמוֹהוּ לֹא תִסָּף: |

Chapter 11/12

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| 7a | ולכל בני ישראל |
| b | לא יחרץ-כלב לשנו למאיש ועד-בהמה |
| c | למען תדעון אשר יפלה יהוה בין מצרים ובין ישראל: |
| 8a | וירדו כל-עבדיך אלה אלי והשתחווי-לי לאמר |
| b | צא אתה וכל-העם אשר-ברגליך |
| c | ואחרי-כן אצא |
| d | ויצא מעם-פרעה בחרי-אף: ס |
| 9a | ויאמר יהוה אל-משה |
| b | לא-ישמע אליכם פרעה |
| c | למען רבות מופתי בארץ מצרים: |
| 10a | ומשה ואהרן עשו את-כל-המופתים האלה לפני פרעה |
| b | בניחוק יהוה את-לב פרעה |
| c | ולא-שלח את-בני-ישראל מארצו: פ |
| 12:1 | ויאמר יהוה אל-משה ואל-אהרן בארץ מצרים לאמר: |
| 2a | החדש הזה לכם ראש חדשים |
| b | ראשון הוא לכם לחדשי השנה: |
| 3a | הברו אל-כל-עדת ישראל לאמר |
| b | בעשר לחדש הזה |
| c | ויקחו להם איש שה לבית-אבתו שה לבית: |
| 4a | ואם-ימנע הבית מהית משה |
| b | ולקח הוא ושכנו הקרב אל-ביתו במקסת נפש |
| c | איש לפי אכלו תכסו על-השה: |
| 5a | שה תמים זכר בן-שנה יהיה לכם |
| b | מן-הבכשים ומן-העזים תקחו: |
| 6a | והיה לכם למשמרת עד ארבעה עשר יום לחדש הזה |
| b | ושחטו אתו כל קהל עדת-ישראל בין הערבים: |
| 7a | ולקחו מן-הדם |
| b | ונתנו על-שתי המזוזות ועל-המשקוף |
| c | על הבתים אשר-יאכלו אתו בהם: |
| 8a | ואכלו את-הבשר בלילה הזה |
| b | צלי-אש ומצות על-מורים יאכלהו: |
| 9a | אל-תאכלו ממנו נא |
| b | ובשל מבשל במקום |
| c | כי אם-צלי-אש |
| d | ראשו על-קרעיו ועל-קרבו: |
| 10a | ולא-תחירו ממנו עד-בקר |
| b | והנותר ממנו עד-בקר באש תשרפו: |
| 11a | וככה תאכלו אתו |
| b | מתניכם חגרים |
| c | נעליכם ברגליכם |
| d | ומקלכם בידכם |
| e | ואכלתם אתו בחפזון |
| f | פסח הוא ליהוה: |

Chapter 12

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| 12a | וְעָבַרְתִּי בְּאֶרֶץ־מִצְרַיִם בְּלִילָה הַזֶּה |
| b | וְהִכִּיתִי כָל־בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מֵאֲדָם וְעַד־בְּהֵמָה |
| c | וּבְכָל־אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם אֶעֱשֶׂה שְׁפָטִים |
| d | אֲנִי יְהוָה: |
| 13a | וְהָיָה הַדָּם לָכֶם לָאֵת עַל הַבָּתִּים אֲשֶׁר אִתָּם שֵׁם |
| b | וּרְאִיתִי אֶת־הַדָּם וּפָסַחְתִּי עֲלֵכֶם |
| c | וְלֹא־יְהִיָּה בְכֶם נֶגֶף לַמִּשְׁחָת בַּחֲכַתִּי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: |
| 14a | וְהָיָה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לָכֶם לְזִכְרוֹן |
| b | וַחֲנֻתָם אִתּוֹ חֹג לַיהוָה |
| c | לְדַרְתִּיכֶם חֹקֶת עוֹלָם תִּחְגְּגוּ: |
| 15a | שִׁבְעַת יָמִים מִצּוֹת תֹּאכְלוּ |
| b | אֵךְ בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן תִּשְׁבִּיתוּ שָׂאֵר מִבְּתִיכֶם |
| c | כִּי כָל־אֹכֵל חֶמֶץ וְנִכְרַתָּה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהִוא מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל מִיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן עַד־יּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי: |
| 16a | וּבַיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן מִקְרֹא־קֹדֶשׁ |
| b | וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִקְרֹא־קֹדֶשׁ יְהִיָּה לָכֶם |
| c | כָּל־מְלָאכָה לֹא־יַעֲשֶׂה בָהֶם |
| d | אֵךְ אֲשֶׁר יֹאכֵל לְכָל־נֶפֶשׁ הוּא לְבַדּוֹ יַעֲשֶׂה לָכֶם: |
| 17a | וּשְׁמִרְתֶּם אֶת־הַמִּצּוֹת |
| b | כִּי בְעֵצָם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הוֹצֵאתִי אֶת־עַבְדֹתֵיכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם |
| c | וּשְׁמִרְתֶּם אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְדַרְתִּיכֶם חֹקֶת עוֹלָם: |
| 18a | בְּרִאשׁוֹן בְּאַרְבַּעַת עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ בַּעֲרֵב תֹּאכְלוּ מִצֹּת |
| b | עַד יוֹם הָאֶחָד וְעֶשְׂרִים לַחֹדֶשׁ בַּעֲרֵב: |
| 19a | שִׁבְעַת יָמִים שָׂאֵר לֹא יִמְצָא בְּבִתֵּיכֶם |
| b | כִּי כָל־אֹכֵל מִחֶמֶצַת וְנִכְרַתָּה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהִוא מֵעֵדֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל |
| c | בִּגְרַם וּבְאֶזְרַח הָאֶרֶץ: |
| 20a | כָּל־מִחֶמֶצַת לֹא תֹאכְלוּ בְּכָל מוֹשְׁבֵיכֶם |
| b | תֹּאכְלוּ מִצּוֹת: פ |
| 21a | וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה לְכָל־זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל |
| b | וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם |
| c | מִשְׁכּוֹ וּקְחוּ לָכֶם צֹאן לַמִּשְׁפָּחֹתֵיכֶם |
| d | וְשַׁחֲטוּ הַפֶּסַח: |
| 22a | וּלְקַחְתֶּם אֲגֻדַּת אֲזוֹב |
| b | וּטְבַלְתֶּם בָּהֶם אֲשֶׁר־בַּסֶּף |
| c | וְהִנֵּעְתֶם אֶל־הַמִּשְׁקוֹף וְאֶל־שְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזוֹת מִן־הַדָּם אֲשֶׁר בַּסֶּף |
| d | וְאַתֶּם לֹא תֵצְאוּ אִישׁ |
| e | מִפֶּתַח־בֵּיתוֹ עַד־בֹּקֶר: |
| 23a | וְעָבַר יְהוָה לִגְנֹף אֶת־מִצְרַיִם |
| b | וּרְאָה אֶת־הַדָּם עַל־הַמִּשְׁקוֹף וְעַל שְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזוֹת |
| c | וּפָסַח יְהוָה עַל־הַפֶּתַח |
| d | וְלֹא יִתֵּן הַמִּשְׁחָת לְבֹא אֶל־בְּתִיכֶם לִגְנֹף: |
| 24a | וּשְׁמִרְתֶּם אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה |
| b | לְחֻק־לֶךְ וּלְגִנּוּי עַד־עוֹלָם: |
| 25a | וְהָיָה כִּי־תֵבֹאוּ אֶל־הָאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן יְהוָה לָכֶם |
| b | כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר |

Chapter 12

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| c | ושמרתם את העברה הזאת: |
| 26a | והיה כִּי־יאמרו אליכם בניכם |
| b | מה העברה הזאת לכם: |
| 27a | ונאמרתם |
| b | זבח־פסח הוא ליהוה |
| c | אשר פסח על־בתי בני־ישראל במצרים |
| d | בנגפו את־מצרים ואת־בתיו הציל |
| e | וַיִּקְרָא הָעָם וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ: |
| 28a | וַיֵּלְכוּ |
| b | בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל |
| c | כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן כִּן עָשׂוּ: ס |
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| 29a | וַיְהִי בַחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה |
| b | וַיְהוֹה הַקֹּהֵל כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם |
| c | מִבְּכוֹר פָּרֹעַה הַיֹּשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאוֹ עַד בְּכוֹר הַשְּׂבִי אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית הַבּוֹר |
| d | וְכָל בְּכוֹר בַּהֲמָה: |
| 30a | וַיָּקָם פָּרֹעַה לַיְלָה הוּא וְכָל־עַבְדָּיו וְכָל־מִצְרַיִם |
| b | וַתְּהִי צַעֲקָה גְדֹלָה בְּמִצְרַיִם |
| c | כִּי־אֵין בֵּית אֲשֶׁר אֵין־שָׁם מָת: |
| 31a | וַיִּקְרָא לְמֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן לַיְלָה |
| b | כִּי־אָמַר |
| c | קוּמוּ צֵאוּ מִתּוֹךְ עַמִּי |
| d | גַּם־אַתֶּם גַּם־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל |
| e | וּלְכוּ עִבְדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה כְּדִבְרֵכֶם: |
| 32a | גַּם־צִאֲנֻכֶם גַּם־בְּקִרְכֶם קָחוּ |
| b | כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתֶּם וְלָכוּ |
| c | וּבִרְכַּתֶּם גַּם־אֹתִי: |
| 33a | וַתִּחַזַּק מִצְרַיִם עַל־הָעָם לִמְהֵרָה לְשַׁלְּחָם מִן־הָאָרֶץ |
| b | כִּי אָמְרוּ |
| c | כִּלְנוּ מָתִים: |
| 34a | וַיִּשָּׂא הָעָם אֶת־בִּצְקוֹ טָרֶם יַחֲמִין |
| b | מִשְׁאֲרֵתָם צָרַח בְּשִׁמְלָתָם עַל־שָׂכְמָם: |
| 35a | וּבְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל עָשׂוּ כְּדִבַּר מֹשֶׁה |
| b | וַיִּשְׁאַלּוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם כְּלִי־כֶסֶף וְכָלִי זָהָב וּשְׁמֶלֶחַ: |
| 36a | וַיְהִי וַתֵּן אֶת־חֵן הָעָם בְּעֵינֵי מִצְרַיִם |
| b | וַיִּשְׁאַלּוּם |
| c | כִּי־נִצְּלוּ אֶת־מִצְרַיִם: ז |
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| 37a | וַיִּסְעוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִרַעַמְסֵס סִכְתָּה |
| b | כְּשֶׁש־מָאוֹת אֶלֶף רַגְלֵי הַנִּבְרִים לְבַד מִטָּף: |
| 38a | וְגַם־עָרַב רַב עָלָה אִתָּם |
| b | וַצֹּאן וּבָקָר מִקֶּנֶה כֶּבֶד מְאֹד: |
| 39a | וַיֹּאפּוּ אֶת־הַבָּצֵק אֲשֶׁר הוֹצִיאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם עֹנֹת מִצּוֹת כִּי לֹא חָמִין |
| b | כִּי־נָרְשׂוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לְהַתְמַהֲמַה |
| c | וְגַם־צָדָה לֹא־עָשׂוּ לָהֶם: |

Chapter 12/13

40a ומושב בני ישראל אשר ישבו במצרים

b שלשים שנה וארבע מאות שנה:

41a ויהי מקץ שלשים שנה וארבע מאות שנה

b ויהי בעצם היום הזה יצאו כל־צבאות יהוה מארץ מצרים:

42a ליל שמרים הוא ליהוה להוציאם מארץ מצרים

b הוא־הלילה הזה ליהוה

c שמרים לכל־בני ישראל לדרתם: ה

43a ויאמר יהוה אל־משה ואהרן

b זאת חקת הפסח

c כל־בן־זכר לא־יאכל בו:

44a וכל־עבד איש מקנת־קסף

b ומלתה אתו אז יאכל בו:

45 תושב ושכיר לא־יאכל־בו:

46a בבית אחד יאכל

b לא־תוציא מן־הבית מן־הבשר חוצה

c ועצם לא תשברו־בו:

47 כל־עדת ישראל יעשו אתו:

48a וכי־יגור אתך גר ועשה פסח ליהוה

b המול לו כל־זכר ואז יקרב לעשתו

c והיה כאזרח הארץ

d וכל־ערל לא־יאכל בו:

49 תורה אחת יהיה לאזרח ולגר הגר בתוכם:

50a ויעשו כל־בני ישראל

b כאשר צוה יהוה את־משה ואת־אהרן כן עשו: ס

51a ויהי בעצם היום הזה

b הוציא יהוה את־בני ישראל מארץ מצרים על־צבאתם: ה

13:1 ויברך יהוה אל־משה לאמר:

2a קה־ש־לי כל־בכור

b פטר כל־רחם בבני ישראל

c באדם ובבהמה

d לי הוא:

3a ויאמר משה אל־העם

b זכור את־היום הזה אשר יצאתם ממצרים מבית עבדים

c כי בחזק יד הוציא יהוה אתכם מזה ולא יאכל חמץ:

4 היום אתם יצאים בחדש האביב:

5a והיה כִּי־יביאך יהוה אל־ארץ הכנעני והחתי והאמרי והחוי והיבوسی

b אשר נשבע לאבותיך לתת לך ארץ זבת חלב ודבש

c ועבדת את־העבודה הזאת בחדש הזה:

6a שבעת ימים תאכל מצה

b וביום השביעי חג ליהוה:

7a מצות יאכל את שבעת הימים

b ולא־יראה לך חמץ ולא־יראה לך שאר בכל־גבלך:

Chapter 13

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| 8a | והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר |
| b | בעבור זה עשה יהוה לי בצאתי ממצרים: |
| 9a | והיה לך לאות על־ידך |
| b | ולזכרון בין עיניך |
| c | למען תהיה תורת יהוה בפיד |
| d | כי ביד חזקה הוצאתי יהוה ממצרים: |
| 10a | ושמרת את־החקה הזאת למועדה |
| b | מימים ימימה: ס |
| 11a | והיה כִּי־באך יהוה אל־ארץ הכנעני |
| b | כאשר נשבע לך ולאבתך |
| c | ונתנה לך: |
| 12a | והעברת כל־פטר־רחם ליהוה |
| b | וכל־פטר שגר בהמה אשר יהיה לך |
| c | הזכרים ליהוה: |
| 13a | וכל־פטר חמור תפדה בשה |
| b | ואם־לא תפדה וערפתו |
| c | וכל בכור אדם בבניך תפדה: |
| 14a | והיה כִּי־ישאלך בנך מחר לאמר |
| b | מה־זאת |
| c | ואמרת אליו |
| d | בחזק יד הוציאנו יהוה ממצרים מבית עבדים: |
| 15a | ויהי כִּי־הקשה פרעה לשלחנו |
| b | ויהרג יהוה כל־בכור בארץ מצרים |
| c | מבכר אדם ועד־בכור בהמה |
| d | על־כן אני זבח ליהוה כל־פטר רחם הזכרים |
| e | וכל־בכור בני אפדה: |
| 16a | והיה לאות על־ידך |
| b | ולטוטפת בין עיניך |
| c | כי בחזק יד הוציאנו יהוה ממצרים: ס |
| 17a | ויהי בשלח פרעה את־העם |
| b | ולא־נחם אלהים הדרך ארץ פלשתים כי קרוב הוא |
| c | כי אמר אלהים |
| d | פְּרִינָחֶם הָעָם בְּרֹאחֶם מִלְחָמָה וְשָׁבוּ מִצְרַיִם: |
| 18a | ויסב אלהים את־העם הדרך המדבר ים־סוף |
| b | וחמשים עלו בני־ישראל מארץ מצרים: |
| 19a | ויקח משה את־עצמות יוסף עמו |
| b | כי השבע השביע את־בני ישראל לאמר |
| c | פקד ופקד אלהים אתכם |
| d | והעליתם את־עצמותי מזה אתכם: |
| 20a | ויסעו מספת |
| b | וינחנו באחם בקצה המדבר: |
| 21a | ויהוה הלך לפניהם יומם בעמוד ענן לנחתם הדרך |
| b | ולילה בעמוד אש להאיר להם |

14:1 וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר:

2a דבר אל-בני ישראל וישבו ויחנו לפני פי החירות

b בין מגדל ובין הים

c לפני בעל צפן נכחו תחנו על-הים:

3a ואמר פרעה לבני ישראל

b נבכים הם בארץ

c סגר עליהם המדבר:

4a וחקתי את-לב-פרעה

b ורדף אחריהם

c ואקבדה בפרעה ובכל-חילו

d וידעו מצרים כי-אני יהוה

e ויעשו-כן:

5a ויגד למלך מצרים כי ברח העם

b ויהפך לבב פרעה ועבדיו אל-העם

c ויאמרו

d מה-זאת עשינו

e כי-שלחנו את-ישראל מעבדנו:

6a ויאסר את-רכבו

b ואת-עמו לקח עמו:

7a ויגח שש-מאות רכב בחור

b וכל רכב מצרים

c ושלשם על-כלו:

8a ויחזק יהוה את-לב פרעה מלך מצרים

b ויירדף אחרי בני ישראל

c ובני ישראל יצאים ביד רמה:

9a ויירדפו מצרים אחריהם

b וישינו אותם חנים על-הים

c כל-סוס רכב פרעה ופרשיו וחילו על-פי החירות לפני בעל צפן:

10a ופרעה הקריב

b וישאו בני-ישראל את-עיניהם

c והנה מצרים נסע אחריהם

d וייראו מאד

e ויעצקו בני-ישראל אל-יהוה:

11a ויאמרו אל-משה

b המבלי אין-קברים במצרים לקחתנו למות במדבר

c מה-זאת עשית לנו להוציאנו ממצרים:

12a הלא-זה הדבר אשר דברנו אליך במצרים לאמר

b חדל ממנו

c ונעבדה את-מצרים

d כי טוב לנו עבד את-מצרים ממחנו במדבר:

13a ויאמר משה אל-העם

b אל-תיראו

Chapter 14

- c הַתִּנְצְבוּ וְרָאוּ אֶת־יְשׁוּעַת יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה לָכֶם הַיּוֹם
d כִּי אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתֶם אֶת־מִצְרִים הַיּוֹם
e לֹא חֲסִיפּוֹ לִרְאֹתָם עוֹד עַד־עוֹלָם:
14a יְהוָה יִלְחֶם לָכֶם
b וְאַתֶּם תַּחֲרִישׁוּן: ה'

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- 15a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה
b מִה־תִּצְעַק אֵלַי
c דְּבַר אֶל־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּסְעוּ:
16a וְאַתָּה
b הָרָם אֶת־מִטָּךְ
c וְנָטָה אֶת־יָדְךָ עַל־הֵם
d וּבִקְעָהוּ
e וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחוּף הַיָּם בִּיבֻשָּׁה:
17a וְאֲנִי
b הִנְנִי מִחֹזֶק אֶת־לֵב מִצְרַיִם
c וַיָּבֹאוּ אַחֲרֵיהֶם
d וְאֶכְבְּדָה בַּפְּרָעָה וּבְכָל־חִילוֹ בְּרַכְּבוֹ וּבַפְּרָשָׁיו:
18a וַיִּדְעוּ מִצְרַיִם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה
b בְּהַפְּכֹדִי בַּפְּרָעָה בְּרַכְּבוֹ וּבַפְּרָשָׁיו:
19a וַיִּסַּע מֶלֶאךָ הָאֱלֹהִים הַחַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי מַחֲנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל
b וַיֵּלֶךְ מֵאַחֲרֵיהֶם
c וַיִּסַּע עֲמוּד הָעֲנָן מִפְּנֵיהֶם
d וַיַּעֲמֹד מֵאַחֲרֵיהֶם:
20a וַיָּבֹא בֵין מַחֲנֵה מִצְרַיִם וּבֵין מַחֲנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל
b וַיְהִי הָעֲנָן וַהַחֹשֶׁךְ
c וַיָּאֲרָ אֶת־הַלֵּילָה
d וְלֹא־קָרַב זֶה אֶל־זֶה כָּל־הַלַּיְלָה:
21a וַיֵּט מֹשֶׁה אֶת־יָדוֹ עַל־הֵם
b וַיּוֹלֶךְ יְהוָה אֶת־הֵם בְּרוּחַ קָדִים עֶזָה כָּל־הַלַּיְלָה
c וַיִּשֶׁם אֶת־הֵם לְחֹרֶבָה
d וַיִּבְקְעוּ הַמָּיִם:
22a וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחוּף הַיָּם בִּיבֻשָּׁה
b וְהַמָּיִם לָהֶם חֲמָה מִיַּמִּינָם וּמִשְׁמָאלָם:
23a וַיִּרְדְּפוּ מִצְרַיִם
b וַיָּבֹאוּ אַחֲרֵיהֶם כָּל סוֹס פְּרָעָה רָכְבוֹ וּפָרָשָׁיו אֶל־חוּף הַיָּם:
24a וַיְהִי בְּאֲשֶׁמֶת הַבֶּקָר
b וַיִּשְׁקַף יְהוָה אֶל־מַחֲנֵה מִצְרַיִם בְּעֲמֹד אֵשׁ וָעָנָן
c וַיִּהְיֶה אֵת מַחֲנֵה מִצְרַיִם:
25a וַיִּסַּר אֵת אַפֵּן מִרַכְבֹּתָיו
b וַיַּנְהִיגוּהוּ בִּכְבֹּדָת
c וַיֹּאמֶר מִצְרַיִם
e אֲנוֹסָה מִפְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי יְהוָה נִלְחָם לָהֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם: ה'

26a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה

Chapter 14

- b נָשָׂה אֶת־דָּוִד עַל־הַיָּמִים
c וַיָּשָׁבוּ הַיָּמִים עַל־מִצְרַיִם עַל־רֶכֶבּוֹ וְעַל־פָּרָשָׁיו:
27a וַיֵּשֶׁב מֹשֶׁה אֶת־דָּוִד עַל־הַיָּמִים
b וַיָּשָׁב הַיָּמִים לַפָּנוֹת בְּקֶרֶן לְאִתְּנֹו
c וּמִצְרַיִם נָסִים לְקִרְאָתוֹ
d וַיִּנְעַר יְהוָה אֶת־מִצְרַיִם בְּחוּף הַיָּמִים:
28a וַיָּשָׁבוּ הַיָּמִים וַיִּכְסּוּ אֶת־הָרֶכֶב וְאֶת־הַפָּרָשִׁים לְכָל חֵיל פְּרָעָה הַבָּאִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם בַּיָּמִים
b לֹא־נִשְׁאַר בָּהֶם עַד־אֶחָד:
29a וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הָלְכוּ בִּנְקִשָׁה בְּחוּף הַיָּמִים
b וְהַיָּמִים לָהֶם חֲמָה מִיָּמִינָם וּמִשְׁמָאלָם:
30a וַיֹּשְׁעַ יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם
b וַיִּירָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִצְרַיִם מֵת עַל־שִׁפְתַּי הַיָּמִים:
31a וַיִּירָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַיָּד הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה בְּמִצְרַיִם
b וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת־יְהוָה
c וַיֹּאמִינוּ בִּיהוָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ: ה

APPENDIX IV: Poetic Analysis of the Song at the Sea

1

A אז ישיר־משה ובני ישראל את־השירה הזאת ליהוה Then Moses and the children
of Israel sung this song to the Lord

B ויאמרו לאמר And they said:

C₁ אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי־נָאֵה נָאֵה I will sing to the Lord for he is surely exalted

C₂ סוס ורכבו רָמָה בַּיָּם: Horse and its rider he cast into the sea

2

A₁ עֲזִי וְזִמְרָת יְהוָה The Lord is my strength and my song

A₂ וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה And he has become my salvation

B₁ זֶה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֵנֹהוּ This is my God and I will praise him

B₂ אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי וְאֶרְמְמֶנְהוּ The God of my father and I will glorify him

3

A יהוה איש מלחמה The Lord is a man of war

B יהוה שְׁמוֹ The Lord is his name

4

A₁ מִרְכָּבֹת פָּרֹעַ וְחִילוֹ יָרָה בַּיָּם The chariots of pharaoh and his army he cast into the sea

A₂ וּמִבְּחַר שְׁלֹשֵׁי טַבָּעוֹ בַּיָּם־סוּף and his choice officers sunk into the sea of reeds

5

A תְּהוֹמֹת יַכְסִּימוּ The depths covered them

B יָרְדוּ בַמְּצוֹלֹת כְּמוֹ־אֶבֶן They went down the depths like a stone

6

A יְמִינְךָ יְהוָה נֹאדָרִי בְכֹחַ Your right hand Oh Lord, is majestic in strength

B יְמִינְךָ יְהוָה תִּרְעֵץ אוֹיֵב Your right hand Oh Lord, shatters the enemy

7

A וּבָרַב גְּאוּנְךָ תִּהְרַס קִמְיָךְ And by the greatness of your excellence you
overthrow those who rise up against you

B תִּשְׁלַח חֲרֹנֶךָ You sent forth your burning anger

C יֹאכֻלְמוּ כֶּקֶשׁ It consumed them like chaff

וּבְרוּחַ אֶפֶיךָ נִעְרְמוּ מַיִם

And by the blast of your nostrils the waters were heaped up

B₁ נִצְבּוּ כַּמּוֹנֵד נְזִילִים

The floods stood like a heap

B₂ קָפְאוּ תְהוֹמַת בְּלִבָּיִם

The depths congealed in the heart of the sea

9-10

A אָמַר אוֹיֵב

The enemy said

B אֶרְדֶּף

"I will pursue"

C אֶשִׁיג

"I will overtake"

D אֶחְלַק שָׁלָל

"I will divide the plunder"

E תִּמְלֶאמוּ נַפְשֵׁי

"My desire will be fulfilled on them"

F אֶרִיק חֶרְבִי

"I will empty out my sword"

G תּוֹרִישְׁמוּ יָדַי

"My hand will dispossess them"

H נִשְׁפַּת בְּרוּחֲךָ

You blew with your breath

I כָּסְמוּ יָם

The sea covered them

J צָלְלוּ כַּעֲפֹרֶת בַּמַּיִם אֲדִירִים

They sunk like lead in the majestic waters

11

A מִי־כַמּוֹכָה בָּאֱלֹם יְהוָה

Who is like you among the gods O Lord?

B מִי כַמּוֹכָה נְאֻדָּר בְּקֹדֶשׁ

Who is like you majestic in holiness?

C₁ נֹרָא תְהִלָּת

(Who is like you) awesome in praises?

C₂ עֹשֶׂה פֶּלֶא

(Who is like you) a worker of wonders?

12-13

A נָטִיתָ יְמִינְךָ

You stretch forth your right hand

B תִּבְלַעְמוּ אֶרֶץ

The earth swallows them

C נָחִיתָ בְּחַסְדְּךָ עַם־זוֹ נִאֲלָתָה

You lead with your loving kindness this people whom you have redeemed

D נִהַלְתָּ בְּעֹז אֱלֹהֶיךָ קֹדֶשְׁךָ

You guide by your strength to your holy dwelling

14-15

A₁ שָׁמְעוּ עַמִּים

The peoples hear

A₂ יִרְגְּזוּן

They tremble

C חֵיל אֶחָז יִשְׁבִּי פִלִּשְׁתָּה

Agony takes hold of the inhabitants of Philistia

D אִזְ נִבְהָלוּ אֱלֹפֵי עֲדוֹם

Then the chiefs of Edom are terrified

E אִילֵי מוֹאָב יִתְחַזְמוּ רָעָד As for the leaders of Moab, trembling takes hold of them

F נִמְנוּ כָּל יֹשְׁבֵי כְנָעַן All the inhabitants of Canaan melt

16

A תַּפֹּל עֲלֵיהֶם אִימָתָה וּפָחַד Dread and trembling have fallen upon them

B בְּגִדְלֵךְ זָרוּעַךְ יִדְמוּ כָאֶבֶן By your great strength they are silent as a stone

C עַד-יַעֲבֹר עַמְּךָ יְהוָה Until your people cross over, O Lord

D עַד-יַעֲבֹר עַם-זֶה קִנִּיתָ Until they cross over, this people whom you have acquired

17

E תִּבְאֲמוּ וְתִטְעֲמוּ בָהָר נַחֲלָתְךָ You bring them and plant them in the mountain of your inheritance

F מִכּוֹן לְשִׁבְתְּךָ פְּעֻלַּת יְהוָה A place for your dwelling [which] you have made, O LORD

G מִמְקֹדֶשׁ אֲדָנִי כֹנֵנוּ יְדִידְךָ A sanctuary, my Lord, [which] your hand has established

18

A יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד The LORD reigns forever and ever

19

B כִּי בָא סוּס פָּרְעֹה בִּרְכָבוֹ וּבִפָּרָשָׁיו בָּיָם Because the horse of pharaoh with its rider and his officers went into the sea

C וַיִּשָּׁב יְהוָה עֲלֵהֶם אֶת-מֵי הַיָּם And the LORD turned the waters of the sea over them

D וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הָלְכוּ בִיבָשָׁה בְּחוּף הַיָּם But the children of Israel walked on dry ground in the midst of the sea

APPENDIX V: Poetic Analysis of Psalm 77:1-21

לְמִנְצַחַת עַל־יְדִיתוֹן (יְדִיתוֹן) לְאַסָּף מְזֻמֹּר

To the choirmaster: according to Jeduthun. A
song of Asaph

2

A₁ קוֹלִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים וְאֶעֱקֶה

My voice [is] to God and I will cry out

A₂ קוֹלִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים וְהִאָזִין אֵלַי

My voice [is] to God and he will incline his ear to me

3

A בַּיּוֹם צָרָתִי אֲדַנִּי דִרְשָׁתִּי

In the day of my distress I seek the Lord

B יָדִי לַיְלָה נִגְרָה וְלֹא תַפּוּג

My hand at night is poured out (lit. stretched out). It
does not grow numb

C מֵאַנְהָה הִנָּחַם נַפְשִׁי

My soul refuses to be comforted

4

A₁ אֶזְכְּרָה אֱלֹהִים וְאֶמְרָמָה

I remember God and I murmur

A₂ אֶשִׁיחָה וְתַחֲשַׁפֵּן רוּחִי

I talk (muse, complain) and my spirit faints away

סֵלָה:

Selah

5

A אֶחָזַת שְׁמֵרוֹת עֵינַי

You have grasped the eyelids of my eyes

B נִפְעַמְתִּי וְלֹא אֶדְבֹּר:

I am disturbed and I cannot speak

6

A₁ חֲשַׁבְתִּי יָמִים מִקֶּדֶם

I think upon the days from of old

A₂ שָׁנוֹת עוֹלָמִים:

(I think upon) the years of old

7

A אֶזְכְּרָה נְגִינָתִי בַּלַּיְלָה

I remember my music at night

B₁ עִם־לִבִּי אֶשִׁיחָה

With my heart I muse

B₂ וַיַּחֲפֹשׂ רוּחִי:

And my spirit searches (through)

8

A הֲלִעוֹלָמִים יִזְנַח אֲדָנִי

Will the Lord reject forever?

B וְלֹא־יִסָּפֵךְ לְרִצּוֹת עוֹד:

And not continue to accept favourably any more?

9

A הֲאִפֹּס לִנְצַח תִּסָּדֹו

Has his loving kindness ceased forever?

B גִּמְרָ אָמַר לְדֹר וָדֹר:

(Has) the word (or promise) come to an end

for generation and generation?

10

A השכח חנוּח אֵל

Has God forgotten being gracious (to be gracious)?

B אִם-קָפַץ בָּאָר רַחֲמָיו סָלַח:

Or has he in anger drawn together (shut) his
compassions?

11

A וְאָמַר חֲלוּתִי הִיא

And I said, "This is my sickness

B שְׁנוֹת יְמִין עֲלִיוֹן

The changing of the right hand of the Most High"

12

A (אֶזְכֶּר) נֶאֱזָכָר מֵעַלְלִיָּהּ

I remember the deeds of Jah

B כִּי-אֶזְכָּר מִקֶּדֶם פִּלְאָד:

For I remember from of old your wonders

13

A₁ וְהִנֵּיתִי בְּכָל-פַּעַלְךָ

And I meditate on all your work

A₂ וּבַעֲלִילוֹתֶיךָ אֲשִׁיחָה:

And I muse on all your deeds

14

A אֱלֹהִים בְּקֶדֶשׁ הִרְבָּךָ

Oh God! Your way is in holiness

B מִי־אֵל גָּדוֹל בְּאֱלֹהִים:

Who is a great god as God?

15

A אַתָּה הָאֵל עֹשֶׂה פִּלְאָ

You are the God who does wonders

B הוֹדַעְתָּ בְּעַמִּים עֹזְךָ:

You made known among the people your strength

16

A נִאֲלַתְּ בְּזִרְעַ עֹמֶךָ

You redeemed your people with strength

B בְּנֵי-יַעֲקֹב וַיּוֹסֶף סָלַח:

The sons of Jacob and Joseph

17

A רָאוּךָ מַיִם אֱלֹהִים

The waters saw you, oh God!

B רָאוּךָ מַיִם יִחִילוּ

The waters saw you [and] writhed

C אֶף יִרְגְּזוּ תְהוֹמוֹת:

Also the depths (*Tihomot*) quivered

18

A זָרְמוּ מַיִם עֲבוּחַ

Dark clouds poured forth water

B קוֹל נָתַנוּ שִׁחֲקִים

The sky (or clouds) thundered (lit. gave a sound)

C אֶף-הִצָּצִיד יִתְחַלְכוּ:

Also your arrows went everywhere (went back
and forth)

19

A קול רעמך בגלגל

The sound of your thunder was in the whirlwind

B האירו ברקים תבל

Lightnings lit the world

C רנזה ותרעש הארץ:

The earth quaked and shook

20

A בים הרקד

Your way appeared in the sea

B (ושבילך) [ושבילך] במים רבים

And your paths in the many (abundant) waters

C ועקבותיך לא נדעו:

But your footprints were not known

21

A נחית כצאן עמך

You led your people like sheep

B ביד־משה ואהרן:

By the hand of Moses and Aaron

APPENDIX VI: Discourse Analysis of Joshua 24:1-28

- a וַיֹּאסֶף יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶת־כָּל־שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׂכֵמָה
b וַיִּקְרָא לְזִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְרָאשֵׁי וּלְשֹׁפְטָיו וּלְשֹׁטְרָיו
c וַיִּתְּנֻצְבוּ לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים:
2a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־כָּל־הָעָם
b כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
c בַּעֲבַר הַנָּהָר יָשְׁבוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם מֵעוֹלָם תַּרְחַ אָבִי אַבְרָהָם וְאָבִי נָחוֹר
d וַיַּעֲבְדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים:
3a וְאַחַח אֶת־אֲבִיכֶם אֶת־אַבְרָהָם מֵעֶבֶר הַנָּהָר
b וְאוֹלָךְ אוֹתוֹ בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן
c (וְאַרְבֵּ) (וְנֹאֲרָבָה) אֶת־זֶרְעוֹ
d וְאַתָּן־לֹו אֶת־יִצְחָק:
4 a וְאַתָּן לְיִצְחָק אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וְאַתָּעֲשׂוּ
b וְאַתָּן לְעֵשָׂו אֶת־הַר שְׁעִיר לְרֶשֶׁת אוֹתוֹ
c וַיַּעֲקֹב וּבְנָיו יָרְדוּ מִצְרָיִם:
5a וְאַשְׁלַח אֶת־מֹשֶׁה וְאַתָּה־הָרִן
b וְאַנְף אֶת־מִצְרַיִם
c כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי בְּקִרְבּוֹ
d וְאַחֲרַי הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם:
6a וְאוֹצִיא אֶת־אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם
b וַתִּבְּאוּ הַיָּמָה
c וַיִּרְדְּפוּ מִצְרַיִם אַחֲרַי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם בְּרֶכֶב וּבַפָּרָשִׁים יַס־סוּף:
7a וַיַּעֲקֹר אֶל־יְהוָה
b וַיֵּשֶׁם מֵאֶפֶל בֵּינֵיכֶם וּבֵין הַמִּצְרַיִם
c וַיָּבֹא עָלָיו אֶת־הָיִם
d וַיִּכְסֶּהוּ
e וַתַּרְאִינָה עֵינֵיכֶם אֶת אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי בַּמִּצְרַיִם
f וַתֵּשְׁבוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר יָמִים רַבִּים:
8a (וְאַבְרָאָה) (וְנֹאֲרָבָה) אֶתְכֶם אֶל־אֶרֶץ הָאֱמֹרִי הַיּוֹשֵׁב בַּעֲבַר הַיַּרְדֵּן
b וַיִּלְחֲמוּ אֶתְכֶם
c וְאַתָּן אוֹתָם בְּיָדְכֶם
d וַתִּירָשׁוּ אֶת־אֶרֶצָם
e וְאַשְׁמִידֶם מִפְּנֵיכֶם:
9a וַיָּקָם בָּלָק בֶּן־צֻפּוֹר מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב
b וַיִּלְחָם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל
c וַיִּשְׁלַח
d וַיִּקְרָא לְבָלָעַם בֶּן־בְּעוֹר לְקַלֵּל אֶתְכֶם:
10a וְלֹא אָבִיתִי לִשְׁמוֹעַ לְבָלָעַם
b וַיִּבְרָךְ בְּרוּךְ אֶתְכֶם
c וְאַצֵּל אֶתְכֶם מִיָּדוֹ:
11a וַתַּעֲבְרוּ אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן וַתִּבְּאוּ אֶל־יְרִיחוֹ
b וַיִּלְחֲמוּ בָכֶם בַּעֲלִי־יְרִיחוֹ הָאֱמֹרִי וַתִּפְרֹזִי וַתִּפְנֹעַנִי וַתַּחֲתִי וַתַּגְרֹשִׁי חֲחוּי וְהַיְבוּסִי
c וְאַתָּן אוֹתָם בְּיָדְכֶם:

- 12a ואֲשַׁלַח לַפְּנִיכֶם אֶת־הַצֶּרֶחַ
 b וַתִּגְדַּשׁ אוֹתָם מִפְּנִיכֶם שְׁנֵי מַלְכֵי הָאֲמֹרִי לֹא בַחֲרָבָךְ וְלֹא בַקֶּשֶׁתְךָ:
 13a וְאַתָּן לָכֶם אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִנְעַת בָּהּ וְעָרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־בָנִיתֶם
 b וַתֵּשְׁבוּ בָהֶם
 c כְּרָמִים וְזֵיתִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נִטְעַתֶם
 d אַתֶּם אֲכָלִים:

- 14a וַעֲתָה
 b יִרְאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה
 c וְעָבְדוּ אוֹתוֹ בַּתָּמִים וּבַאֲמֹת
 d וְהִסִּירוּ אֶת־אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר עָבְדוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם בְּעֶבֶר הַנָּהָר וּבַמִּצְרַיִם
 e וְעָבְדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה:
 15a וְאִם רַע בְּעֵינֵיכֶם לַעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה
 b בַּחֲרוּ לָכֶם הַיּוֹם אֶת־מִי תַעֲבֹדוּן
 c אִם אֶת־אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר־עָבְדוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר (בְּעֶבֶר) [מִעֲבָר] הַנָּהָר
 d וְאִם אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי הָאֲמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם יֹשְׁבִים בָּאֶרֶץ
 e וְאֲנֹכִי וּבֵיתִי נַעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה: ה

16a וַיַּעַן הָעָם
 b וַיֹּאמֶר

- c חֲלִילָה לָנוּ מֵעֹזב אֶת־יְהוָה לַעֲבֹד אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים:
 17a כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ הוּא הַמַּעֲלָה אִתָּנוּ וְאֶת־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
 b מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים
 c וְאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְעֵינֵינוּ אֶת־הָאֲתוֹת הַגְּדֹלוֹת הָאֵלֶּה
 d וַיִּשְׁמְרֵנוּ בְּכָל־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הִלְכְּנוּ בָּהּ
 e וּבְכָל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר עָבְרָנוּ בְּקִרְבָּם:
 18a וַיִּגְדַּשׁ יְהוָה אֶת־כָּל־הָעַמִּים וְאֶת־הָאֲמֹרִי יֹשֵׁב הָאֶרֶץ מִפְּנֵינוּ
 b גַּם־אֲנַחְנוּ נַעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה כִּי־הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ: ס

- 19a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־הָעָם
 b לֹא חֹזְקוּ לַעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה
 c כִּי־אֱלֹהִים קְדָשִׁים הוּא
 d אֶל־קְנוֹא הוּא
 e לֹא־יִשָּׂא לַפִּשְׁעֵיכֶם וּלְחַטְאוֹתֵיכֶם:
 20a כִּי תַעֲזֹבוּ אֶת־יְהוָה וְעָבַדְתֶּם אֱלֹהֵי נָכַר
 b וְשָׁב
 c וְהִרְעָה לָכֶם וְכָלָה אַתְּכֶם אַחֲרֵי אֲשֶׁר־הִיטִיב לָכֶם:

- 21a וַיֹּאמֶר הָעָם אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
 b לֹא כִי אֶת־יְהוָה נַעֲבֹד:
 22a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־הָעָם
 b עֲדִים אַתֶּם בָּכֶם
 c כִּי־אַתֶּם בַּחֲרַתֶּם לָכֶם אֶת־יְהוָה לַעֲבֹד אוֹתוֹ
 d וַיֹּאמְרוּ
 e עֲדִים:

[וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־הָעָם]

- 23a וַעֲתָה
 b הִסִּירוּ אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי הַנָּכַר אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּכֶם
 c וְהָטוּ אֶת־לִבְבְּכֶם אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

- 24a וַיֹּאמְרוּ הָעָם אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
b אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ נַעֲבֹד
c וּבְקוֹלוֹ נִשְׁמָע:
- 25a וַיִּכְרַת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּרִית לָעָם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא
b וַיָּשֶׂם לוֹ חֹק וּמִשְׁפָּט בְּשֵׁכֶם:
- 26a וַיִּכְתֹּב יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּסֵפֶר תּוֹרַת אֱלֹהִים
b וַיִּקַּח אֶבֶן גְּדוֹלָה
c וַיִּקְיֶמָהּ שָׁם תַּחַת הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר בְּמִקְדָּשׁ יְהוָה: ס
- 27a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־כָּל־הָעָם
b הִנֵּה הָאֵבֶן הַזֹּאת תִּהְיֶה־בְנוֹ לְעֵדָה
c כִּי־הִיא שִׁמּוּעָה אֵת כָּל־אֲמָרֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר עִמָּנוּ
d וְהָיְתָה בָכֶם לְעֵדָה
e פֶּן־תִּכְחַשׁוּן בָּאֱלֹהִים:
- 28 וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶת־הָעָם אִישׁ לְנַחֲלָתוֹ: ך

APPENDIX VII: Poetic Analysis of Habakkuk 3:1-19

3:1

The prayer of Habakkuk the prophet
Upon the *Shigyonoth*

תפלה לחבקוק הנביא
על שִׁינּוֹת:

2

A Oh Yahweh! I heard your report. I was afraid

יְהוָה שָׁמַעְתִּי שְׁמוֹעַךְ יְרֵאתִי

*B*₁ Oh Yahweh! Your work, in the midst of the years revive it!

יְהוָה פַּעַלְךָ בְּקֶרֶב שָׁנִים תְּחִיָּהוּ

*B*₂ In the midst of the years, make it known!

בְּקֶרֶב שָׁנִים תוֹדִיעַ

*B*₃ In wrath, remember compassion!

בְּרוֹגֵז רַחֵם תִּזְכּוֹר:

3

*A*₁ God came from Teman!

אֱלֹהִים מִתִּמָּן יָבֹא

*A*₂ And the Holy One from Mount Paran!

וְקָדוֹשׁ מִהַר־פָּאָרָן

Selah

סֵלָה

*B*₁ His glory, (it) covered the heavens!

כְּסָה שָׁמַיִם הוֹדוֹ

*B*₂ And His praise, the earth was full (of it)!

וַתִּמְלֵא חֶמְלָה הָאָרֶץ:

4

A Brightness like light there was!

וַנִּנֶּה כְּאוֹר תְּהִיָּה

B He had horns (coming out) from his hand!

קַרְנִים מִיָּדוֹ לוֹ

C And there was the hiding place of his⁷¹ strength!

וְשָׁם חִבְיוֹן עֹזוֹ:

5

A Before his face, pestilence went out!

לִפְנֵי יְלֶךְ דָּבָר

B And fire bolt went out at His feet!

וַיֵּצֵא רֶשֶׁף לְרַגְלָיו:

6

*A*₁ He stood and He measured the earth!

עָמַד וַיִּמְדֹּד אֶרֶץ

*A*₂ He looked and loosened the nations!

רָאָה וַיִּתֵּר גּוֹיִם

*B*₁ Then the abiding mountains were scattered!

וַיִּתְפָּצְצוּ הַרְרֵי־עַד

*B*₂ The ancient hills bowed down!

שָׁחוּ גִבְעוֹת עוֹלָם

C The everlasting ways are his!

הַלִּיכוֹת עוֹלָם לוֹ:

⁷¹ The ק (עזר) for *Ketib* (עזה). BHS, 1053.

A I saw the tents of Cush under trouble!

תחת און ראיתי אהלי כושן

B The tents⁷² of the land of Midian quaked!

ירגזון יריעות ארץ מדין: ס

8

A Was it at the streams (that) Yahweh was angry?

הבנהרים חרה יהוה

B₁ Or at the rivers, your anger?

אם בנהרים אפך

B₂ Or at the sea, your fury?

אם-בַּיָּם עברתך

C For you rode upon your horses,

כי תרכב על-סוסֶיךָ

D Your chariots of salvation!

מרכבתֶיךָ ישועה:

9

A (In) nakedness, you exposed your bow!

עריה תעור קשתך

B Oaths to the tribes, a word!

שבועות משות אמר

Selah

סלה

C Rivers, you clave the earth!

נהרות חבקע-ארץ:

10

A They saw you, the mountains writhed!

ראוך יחילו הרים

B A flood of water passed over!

זרם מים עבר

C *T^ehom* gave his voice!

נתן תהום קולו

D He lifted his hand upwards!

רום ידיהו נשא:

11

A Sun, moon, they stood in their heights!

שמש ירח עמד זבלה

B₁ For light, your arrows went to and fro (flashed)!

לאור חציך יתלכו

B₂ For brightness, the glitter of your spear!

לננה ברק חניתך:

12

A In indignation, you marched the earth!

בזעם תצעד-ארץ

B In anger, you threshed the nations!

באף תדוש גוים:

13

A₁ You went out for the deliverance of your people!

יצאת לישע עמך

A₂ For the deliverance of your anointed one!

לישע את-משיחך

B₁ You struck the head from the house of the wicked,

מחצת ראש מבית רשע

B₂ Uncovering the foundation up to the neck!

ערות יסוד עד-צוואר

⁷² Literally, 'curtains'.

14

- A** You pierced with their staffs, the head of his warriors!⁷³ נִקְבְּתָּ בַּמַּטְיּוֹ רֹאשׁ (פְּרִזּוֹ) [פְּרִזִּיּוֹ]
B They stormed (out) to scatter me! יִסְעֲרוּ לְהַפִּיצֵנִי
C Their exultation, such as consuming the afflicted in secret! עֲלִיצָתָם כְּמוֹ-לֶאֱכֹל עָנִי בְּמִסְתָּר:

15

- A** You trod through the sea (on) your horses! הִרְכַּתָּ בַּיָּם סוּסֶיךָ
B A heap of many waters! חֲמֹר מַיִם רַבִּים:

16

- A**₁ I heard, and my belly trembled! שָׁמַעְתִּי וַתִּרְגַּז בִּטְנִי
A₂ At the sound, my lips quivered! לִקְוֹל צָלָלוּ שִׁפְתֵי
B₁ Decay entered my bones! יְבוֹא רֶקֶב בְּעַצְמוֹ
B₂ and underneath me, I trembled! וַתַּחְתִּי אֲרָגוּ
C Therefore⁷⁴ I will wait quietly⁷⁵ for the day of distress! אֲשֶׁר אָנוּחַ לַיּוֹם צָרָה
D Ascending upon the people, (when) it invades us! לַעֲלוֹת לָעָם יְנוּדְנוּ:

17

- A**₁ For (even if) the fig tree does not bud, כִּי־תֵאָנֶה לֹא־תִפְרֹחַ
A₂ Or there is no produce in the vine trees, וְאִין יִבּוֹל בַּנֶּפְתִּים
A₃ (Or) the work of the Olive tree fails, כִּחַשׁ מַעֲשֵׂה־זֵית
A₄ Or the fields do not produce food, וּשְׂדֵמוֹת לֹא־עֲשֶׂה אֵכֹל
A₅ (Or) the flock is cut off from the enclosure, גֹּזֵר מִמִּקְלָה צֹאן
A₆ Or there is no herd in the stalls, וְאִין בָּקָר בְּרִפְתִּים:

18

- B**₁ Yet as for me, I exult in Yahweh! וָאֲנִי בַיהוָה אֶעְלוֹזָה
B₂ I rejoice in the God of my salvation! אֲנִילָה בֵּאלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי:

19

- A** Yahweh, the Lord, is my strength! יְהוָה אֲדָנִי חִלִּי
B₁ He makes my feet like (those of) does! וַיִּשְׁם רַגְלִי כְּאַיִלוֹת

⁷³ (פרזיו) for *Ketib* (פרזו). BHS, 1053.

⁷⁴ Lit, “that”, אֲשֶׁר. We deem it as used here in a manner approximating a ‘telic particle’ or introducing a subordinate ‘consequence clause’. Waltke and O’Connor, 511, 635, sections 36.6.1.c, and 38.1.g, respectively.

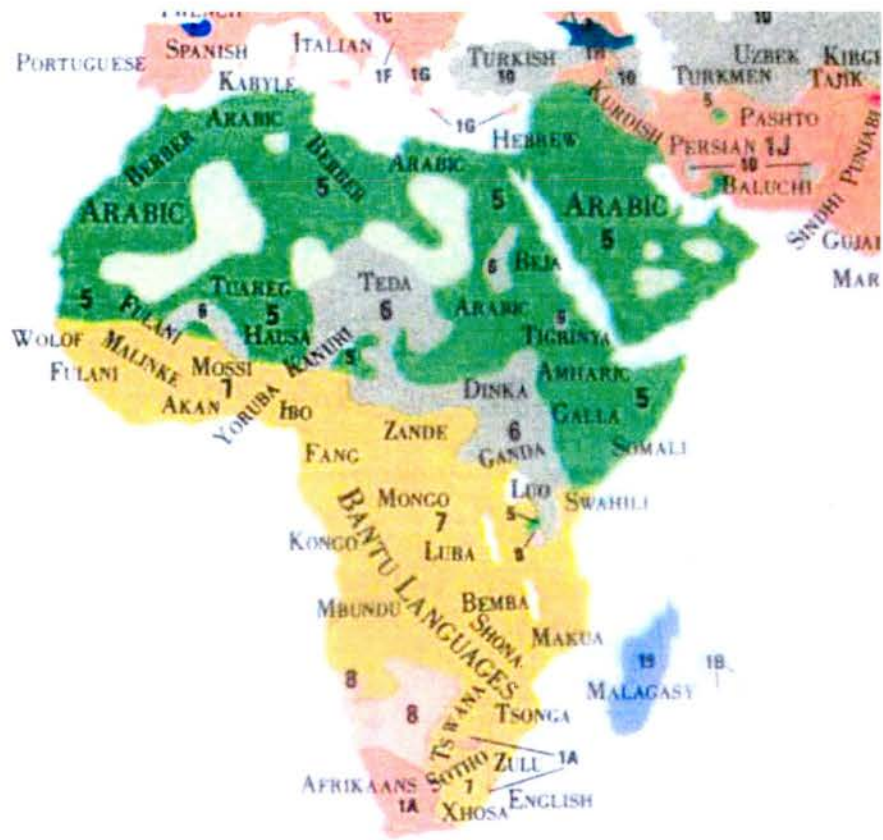
⁷⁵ Lit, “rest”, נֹחַ.

B₂ He makes me to tread upon my heights!
For the director, with my stringed instruments

ועל קמותי יִדְרֹכְנִי
לְמַנְצַח בְּגִינוֹתַי:

APPENDIX VIII: Map of Africa – Ethnic Distribution

Source: *Hammond Atlas of the World*. Second ed. Maplewood, New Jersey: Hammond Incorporated, 1998. 20-21.



LANGUAGE FAMILIES

| | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1-INDO-EUROPEAN | 4-BURUSHASKI | 14-KOREAN |
| 1A-GERMANIC | 5-AURO-ASIATIC | 15-JAPANESE |
| 1B-ROMANCE | (HAMITO-SEMITIC) | 16-DRAVIDIAN |
| 1C-SLAVIC | 6-NILO-SAHARAN | 17-VIETNAMESE |
| 1D-BALTIC | 7-NIGER-CONGO | 18-AUSTRO-ASIATIC |
| 1E-CELTIC | 8-KHOISAN | 19-AUSTRO-NESEAN |
| 1F-ALBANIAN | 9-URUCHE | 20-PAPUAN |
| 1G-GREEK | 10-ALTAIC | 21-AUSTRALIAN |
| 1H-ARMENIAN | 11-PALTO-SIBIRIAN | 22-ESKIMO-ALEUT |
| 1J-IRANIAN | FAMILIES | 23-AMERICAN INDIAN |
| 1K-INDO-ARYAN | 12-SINO-TIBETAN | FAMILIES |
| 2-BASQUE | 13-TUO-KADAI | UNPOPULATED AREAS |
| 3-CALCASIAN FAMILIES | | |

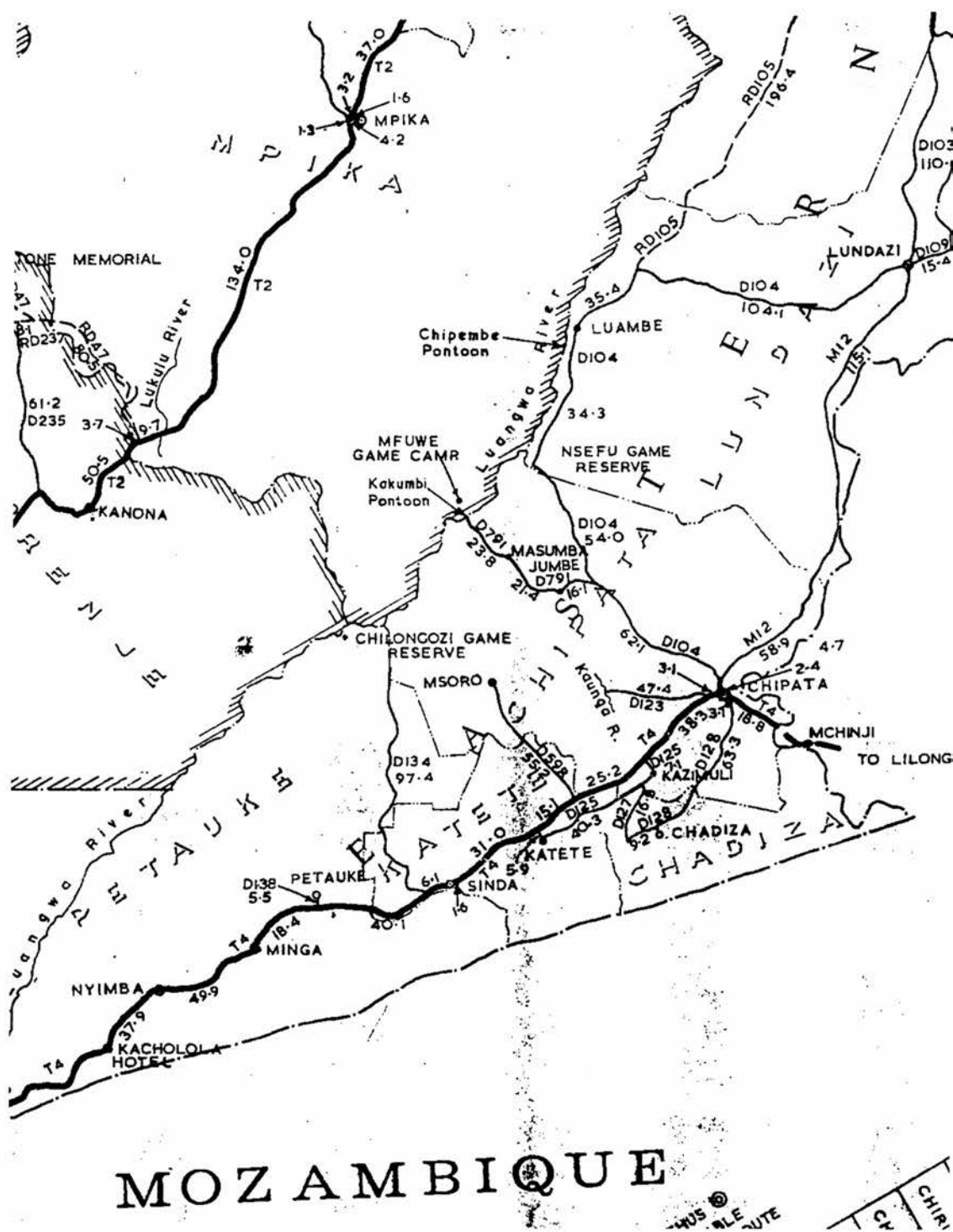
NOTE: Names may vary, depending on source.

Source: Mines, Zambia. Ministry of Lands and. "The Republic of Zambia Tribes and Languages." Lusaka, Zambia: Surveyor General, Ministry of Lands and Mines, 1967.



APPENDIX X: Map of Eastern Province, Zambia – Petauke, Katete, Chadiza, Chipata and Lundazi Districts

Source: Dept., Zambia. Roads. "Metric Road Map: Republic of Zambia." Lusaka, Zambia: Roads Dept., 1973.



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